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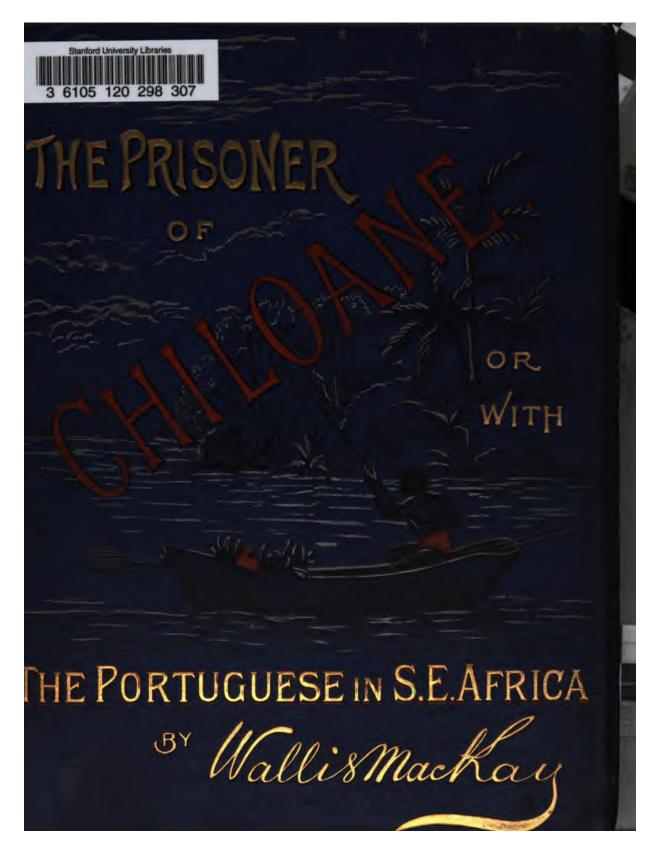
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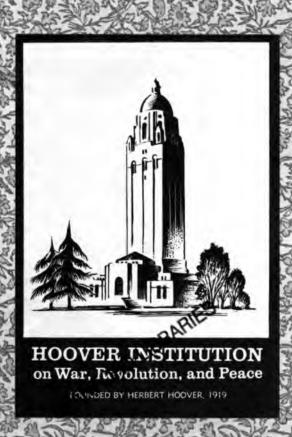
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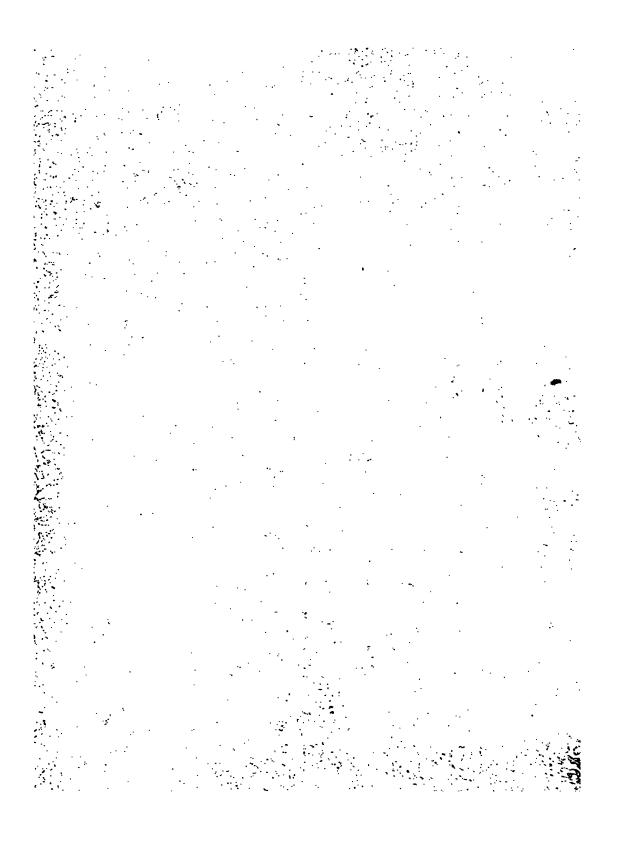
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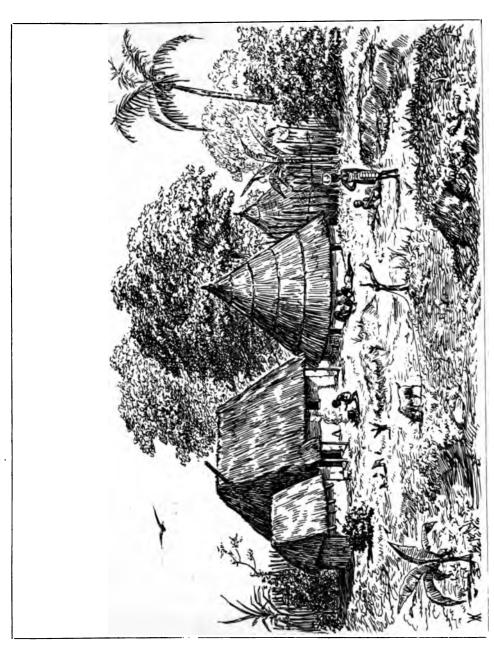
THE PRISONER OF CHILOANE;

OR,

WITH THE PORTUGUESE IN SOUTH-EAST AFRICA.

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THE

PRISONER OF CHILOANE;

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BY

WALLIS MACKAY.

11

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

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And by it there were waters flowing And on it there were young flowers growing Of gentle breath and hue."

Byron's Prisoner of Chillon, Stanza xiii.

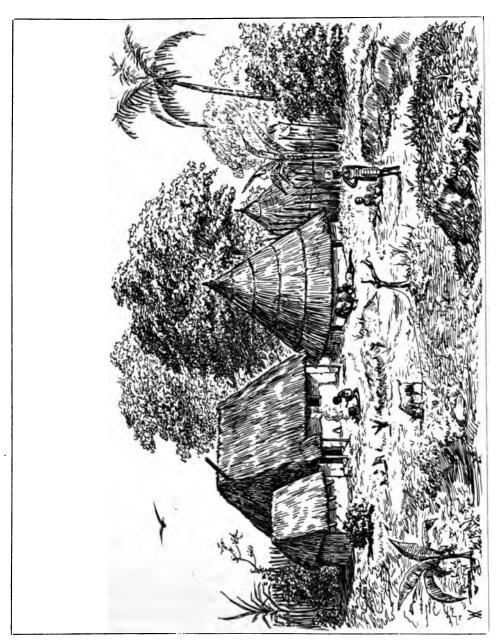
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TRISCHLER AND CO., 18, NEW BRIDGE STREET, BLACKFRIARS.

1890.

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1890.

THE ROSVER LEREAST

TO MY FRIEND,

PHILIP KNEE, ESQ.,

LATE H. B. MAJESTY'S VICE-CONSUL AT DELAGOA BAY,

IN TOKEN OF

A GRATEFUL AND PLEASANT MEMORY,
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED.

•		

PREFACE.

Shortly after my return from Africa I was in the smoking-room of a genial club, where I met a friend who has travelled much and who knows a great deal about the world in general. In the course of conversation he said to me in his pleasant way, "I suppose you are going to do a book? Well, if you do, you'll be swamped, sir, swamped. There are big guns about and coming along, and Africa is a big place to talk about." He being of the American persuasion, I made answer unto him in the diction of his country, and said, "Well, sir, I am going to do a book, and I have been swamped already, and that I am going to tell of. I am aware that there are big guns about, and also that Africa is a big place; but, sir, I have learnt that if you want a new-laid egg there is no necessity to purchase the whole farmyard, and as regards Africa, perhaps I have found an egg that is not altogether addled in a very small corner of it, so we shall see." He replied, "We shall."

It is usual, I think, in books recording pain and danger alleviated by human kindness and sympathy, for the narrators to express their gratitude to those who have succoured them. I have, therefore, to offer my cordial and heart-felt thanks to Mr. Philip Knee, Dr. Edgelow, and Mr. W. B. Giles—all belonging to Delagoa Bay—for their kindness to me during my peregrinations in South-East Africa. Farther afield, I must do the same to Herr A. Hüpfre and Herr Guttling, at Chiloane, and to Mr. Philip Dörrbecker, at Aruanguae, and Mr. Reuben Benningfield, of Durban. At the same time I must ask them, in company with my indulgent readers, to forgive the shortcomings of my story and sketches herein contained.

And now, turning to the book I have brought into existence, I will say with the gentle Herrick:

Make haste away, my booke, and let there be A friendly patron unto thee;
Lest wrapped from hence I see thee lie
Torn for the use of pastery;
Or see thy injured leaves serve well
To make loose gowns for mackarel;
Or see the grocers in a trice
Make hoods of thee to serve out spice.

London, 1890.

WALLIS MACKAY.

THE PRISONER OF CHILOANE.

CHAPTER I.

THE VOYAGE OUT.

to Africa in the gold race has been a popular cry, and of increasing force in recent days; thanks to the wonderful tales of travellers, and the fascinating testimonies of those who have returned to enjoy the results of their labours, and to recount the lights and shadows of "making a pile." The fashion of writing books of wonderful adventures of African travel, exploration, and hunting, has, indeed, tended to swell the numbers of those who pushed forward to the gold-fields of which testimony had been received, or to discover new ones in the unexplored tracts of that great continent.

The fallacious impression that this Tom Tiddler's ground is a place to pick up gold, silver, and all kinds of precious things has been amazingly popular, and many are the purblind enthusiasts who, to their bitter cost,

have found that the road to wealth was a hard one, and that exploring for gold in Africa is far from child's play. One of the most erroneous notions is that of dealing with the natives for concessions of their lands wherein the coveted nuggets lay buried. It was a matter of popular belief that for a few beads or samples of coloured cloth the dusky chief could be induced to part with vast tracts of wealthy country. That noble savage is now a very scarce individual, and an institution not easily come across, even in the

less-known portions of the country. Your genuine ebony son of the soil is a shrewd, cunning person, and has long ago learnt how to estimate the value of Birmingham beads and Manchester merinos. He very well knows the value of current coinage, and the nice distinction between an English sovereign and a French twenty-franc piece. Indeed, the day of bead trading is pretty well a thing of the past, and the infallible rule in visiting the kraal of a Kaffir king with a view to doing business with him is to travel with a heavy pocket and a light kit. Even then the monarch will evince a very off-hand manner of dealing, making much show of his stability and independence.

The sight of arms and ammunition is very dear to him, and he will readily succumb to the offer of horses, dogs, or liquor, this latter being the vehicle through which the Portuguese have been most recently wooing him. We will anon have an opportunity of considering him in his habit as he lives. Meantime, let me record the trip out to the strange land he occupies.

On a fine April morning—a Good Friday, by the way, betokening ill-luck, as a Milesian friend impressed upon me, for starting on any mission, even of a less perilous nature than that of taking a journey to the comparatively little known territory beyond the Mozambique—I found myself one of a group of voyagers starting from Southampton, on board the Union Steamship Company's fine vessel, the "Athenian," bound for Cape Town. The well-known displays of the varied emotions that are evinced when a big ship carries its human freight from "the old country" to a distant land, were all to be witnessed here. Cheek by jowl upon the deck stand pictures of joy and sorrow. The failure in his own country dancing with very glee at seeing the last of it, and full of hope for a bright future in another land; and the grief-stricken ones looking through bitter tears as they watch the last wave of the hands of those they love, and may never see again, receding from them on the quay the ship is slowly leaving in her wake.

Good food is often a good antidote for trying emotions, so down below, to the stately saloon, proceed most of those who erstwhile stood upon the deck bidding farewells, to fare well in a different sense on a repast not to be excelled by, and in every way worthy of, a first-class hotel. A month upon sea, however well appointed the ship may be, turns out, before it is spent, a somewhat weary, stale, and flat piece of business. Try how you may, unless you are endowed with some very exceptional heaven-instilled gift of self-resource, a feeling of boredom takes hold of you, a sense of wanting to turn up some other street than

the one broad promenade deck, to see someone else other than the perpetual self-same Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons that you meet from morning till night. The advantages of finding entertainment and passing the time on board the good ship "Athenian" were very varied and agreeable; and, with the experience of long voyages, I must here pay tribute to the faculty Captain Bainbridge possesses of, so to speak, stage-managing passengers. I take it to be no easy matter to occupy the many temperaments and various tastes (and shocking want of taste sometimes) of those who are under the watchful care of the captain of a large ocean steamer.

Naturally, there were singing and piano-playing to any amount, and the delights of card-playing in the spacious smoking-room, and the well-stocked library; but joy unbounded when the weather is fair and the ship runs free and even, when the most susceptible amongst the passengers have found their sea-legs, to behold one fine morning, a netting being run along the port side of the deck, and preparations in progress for the playing of

cricket and lawn-tennis! Yes, veritable wickets (set in stands) being pitched. Many a good game, too, if not strictly scientific, certainly amusing, was indulged in, I am glad to say, not only by the male creature. but by the fair sex. There is a saying that a good captain makes good officers and good men, and I think this may be fairly claimed by the Union line. I have sailed in several of their ships,



TROPICAL SNOWBALLS.

and it has always been a matter of congratulation amongst the passengers that they met with un-varying attention and courtesy. During our passage out, through the kindness of Mr. Berry, I had an opportunity of viewing not only the fine

engine machinery, but the refrigerator, a most wonderful and complete department of the ship, where rows of frozen carcasses hung, and several tons of fruit and vegetables were stored—looking like a veritable Covent Garden on a frosty morning—to say nothing of hundreds of quarts of milk. It is a monstrous, ingenious contrivance, and truly a marvellous thing to think that upwards of a hundred people could, for the space of a month, sit down to an excellent *cuisine* of fresh fish, meats, vegetables, and fruit, which would have made those of even a generation back stare at in awe. It was somewhat a novel effect for some of the ladies to become possessed of snowballs in the tropics, and pelt their friends with them while crossing the equator.

I should be curiously interested to get a glimpse of the interior of one of those diaries so unremittingly kept by you ladies on board ship. I think to see yourselves as others see you would be highly entertaining, and might, indeed, have a salutary effect. These fair historians cannot have anything in the limited space of shipboard, with unlimited time on their hand, to record, unless they fall back upon the doings, sayings, and general failings of their fellow passengers. The phases of nature do not interest them to the extent of daily pages of closely-written manuscript. They surely must be ingenious monographs on poor humanity, as presented to their observation during the voyage.

We had the regulation wealthy widow on her way out to the land of her adoption after re-visiting Europe for the purchase of London and Parisian finery. Where that good lady stored all her dresses, bonnets, hats, and innumerable fal-lals, will ever be a mystery to me. She seemed thoroughly capable of producing a complete change of costume several times per diem. She was a good-hearted soul, and I believe was about to perpetrate matrimony for the second time. Her chief occupation on shipboard seemed to be receiving the harmless attentions and flattery of a knot of young men, who hovered round her chair incessantly.

Again, there was the belle of the ship (also, by the way, a widow, and mother of a dear little posthumous girl). The best-looking young man on board fell desperately in love with her, and told us with much ardour that he and the belle had made up their minds to get married as soon as they landed. He had been sent out by a fond parent "to see the world." Poor papa! what must he have said when he received young Hopeful's first missive from abroad? Marriages made in heaven may be a success; but I am inclined to think that ship-

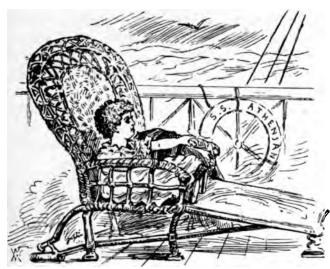
board match-making is a doubtful affair. Let us hope, however, that, like the conclusion of the regulation little romance, they manage to live happily ever afterwards.

There are few things more objectionable, during a protracted sea voyage, I take it, than a bold child. The bold child is invariably a most uninteresting creature, and has a fond mother and indulgent father, both blind to any fault



in their darling's conduct, a matter that gives the precious offspring an opportunity of becoming an irritating influence, and in some cases a terror, to well-regulated people, in the company. In direct contrast to the naughty child, the well-conducted are a pleasure to behold and come in contact with, brightening and lightening the tedium and monotony of the journey. We were especially

fortunate in being blest with the presence of a bevy of beautiful golden-haired little girls. The youngest, with an air of calm self-possession, would occupy a



OUR DUCHESS.

more colour, a little more southern tone, something more ornamental; but, nevertheless, they would very well pass muster in a group of Hibernian pleasure-seekers.

Leave Portugal proper to look after itself and the holiday makers, for by the time we have run out to see the convent of St. Jeronymo, that ancient marble edifice, with its wonderful fifteenth century carvings, a fitting memorial to the place and event of Vasco di Gama's first embarkation on his eastern voyage of discovery. By the time we have taken luncheon with our friends in good easy style at the Hotel Central, it will be time to make for the ship again, and, with a pleasant memory of courteous, kindly people, look lazily out upon the Tagus, and through the full-flavoured wreaths of cigar smoke, consider it a most commendable sheet of water, and even forgive the rascal of a

large Madeira chair, and hold audience with her admirers like a diminutive duchess.

We reached Lisbon on the Easter Monday, and found that city in holiday guise, the peasantry as they tramped down to their devotions or amusements, reminding one strongly of the Irish. Surely those are Mike and Biddy coming blithely down the hilly road! Perhaps there is a dash more ornamental: but



boatman who, having induced us to take a detour in his boat *en route* for the steamer, so nearly kept us behind for the few miserable coins he can sweat out of our helpless position. You will learn to know him in his various phases when you get up country; so now, while you are comfortably housed on the deck of a crack ship, if you cannot bless him, at least reserve the other ejaculatory fate for his brethren in exile where they will make use of your helplessness in a much superior and more refined form of cruelty.

The wind comes up, and cabined, cribbed, confined, is the order of the evening, which is welcome after the fatigues of the day at Lisbon. Ship-rocked with the lullaby of the wind and the dull beat of the engines, one soon finds sleep, until "Coffee" and "Madeira" are simultaneously announced by the steward.

It is a fine morning, clear as crystal after the fresh night blow; and the first view of Madeira gives you the impression that you are looking at a "life-size" cheap German chromo-lithograph of a seaside town. Everything seems vivid and flat from the top of the frame to the bottom; but the eye soon undeceives itself, and your better judgment informs you that those white square patches are not ridiculously incorrect pieces of architecture, but as picturesque houses as those red-tiled, moss-grown edifices of your pet Devon or Cornish resort. There is already an incongruous fair being carried on on the deck; but down the ladder, and into one of the venerable boats of quaint and somewhat classic build, and if you have made up your mind to disbelieve the statements offered by the wily natives—in which you are chiefly right—unbend in this one instance, and heed the advice of your boatman when he reiterates "Hold-a tight-a!"

Bump! whack! "Ugh, my back! Who the—? What the—?" It is no use, my friend; you ought to have taken his advice to hold-a tight-a. But here you are on Madeira shingle, the self-same beach which Lagro landed on, and of which the know-alls of his time, gazing upon it across the liquid blue, said sagely "It is the mouth of hell!" and passed along the silent waters, hugging their wisdom and pitying his. Perhaps they saw dimly in the distance the smoke of the volcano of Pico Torres ascending, as perhaps in these days of grand pyrotechnic displays it may again elect to do. Now you realise the truth of those much-doubted chroniclers of the past regarding the beauties of the "Island of Wood." Never mind gaping at that. It is Blandy's signal tower. "Who is Blandy?" Well, don't let the natives or residents hear you; and learn that Blandy is, was, and will be the creator of all things in Madeira that Mother

Nature did not create before him. But if I cannot appeal to you intellectually all at once, come along to Blandy Brothers' wine stores, and taste some rare Madeira wine. What do you think of that? That is rare Malmsey, sir, grown near to the sea, where it ripens on the vine until it is well nigh of a raisin age—certainly of such a grape age that it manufactures its own saccharine, and is, therefore, not dependent upon any high-dutied, low-qualitied sugar for vinting. Yes, sir, that beautiful deep-coloured nectar lived by the seashore and in the soft night air; as the oldest inhabitant will tell you "heard the crabs sing." But softly, good sir, softly; if we tarry here too long we too may hear the crabs sing, and when the good ship is well under weigh it may be told of us—

They sat them down upon the yellow sand, Between the sun and moon upon the shore; And sweet it was to dream of Fatherland, Of child, and wife, and slave; but evermore Most weary seemed the sea, weary the oar, Weary the wandering fields of barren foam. Then someone said, "We will return no more"; And all at once they sang, "Our island home Is far beyond the wave; we will no longer roam."

So, come along, friend; the idea of singing on the beach may be all very sweet, but the ways of Portuguese authorities are peculiar, and it would be inconvenient to miss our boat. So bless thee, Blandy, bless thee! much of thy nectar might make every goose seem a swan, and we do not wish to make anything out of this "guide" of ours than the cut-throat, cut-purse, cut-and-run scoundrel that he is.

Madeira, it must be admitted, is a thorough success. A place where beauty of surroundings and advantages of a climatic kind combine to offer to the sick and weary health and rest. To the visitor "sound in wind and limb" there is an endless variety, both by flood and field, if one can call those wooded heights by such a term. If you stop up there lunch at Jones's, Bella Vista Hotel.

Then having seen all that can be seen in a homeopathic dose, it is time to make for the beach again. Look down into that ravine that bisects the steep street, where the streamlet percolates amongst the boulders. Is this another bit of Irish scenery, and are those washerwomen beating their linen on the stones, more Biddies and Mollies carrying on a warfare of Celtic badinage, mingled with Milesian laughter? The beggars down here by the boats—surely we have landed from an American liner in the Cove of Cork? surely nowhere else could such ornamental maladies congregate, or such a unique assortment of ghastly

deformities display themselves? Yes; at Madeira, and they are some of its staple enterprises.

Look, there are Edwin and his Angelina stemming their way through the unsavoury throng. The young couple are evidently newly wed, and very good game for those most astute sportsmen and sportswomen who are keenly following on the scent from afar. Poor Edwin! he is burdened with the purchases of the



MADEIRA MENDICANTS.

fair one, and is well nigh powerless in the clutches of his pursuers. Edwin, if you had asked my advice, you would not have bought that parrot. The bird is warranted to last until you are well on board ship, when it will give up the ghost, being so constituted through the drug that was administered to it immediately you struck the bargain. Angelina will weep, I know-her first domestic bereavement; very trying, but never mind, there will be another kind, considerate

vendor floating somewhere around the ship, who will part with another bird as if it was his heart's blood, just to stanch the fair one's tears, and though expensive, it will last you perhaps to the Cape.

The last signal has blown, the tardiest passenger has at last got aboard, the last vendor has been thrust down the ladder. The yells of the diving boys from their boats become furious. "You chuck sheeling, me dive!" "Master, you chuck." I have a large copper coin which has been foisted on me in change upon the lovely island; it is a sort of monetary supercargo, representing ever so many "reis." I have also a piece of silver foil which I have taken off a packet of tobacco. I wrap the sturdy coin in it until it looks like an adipose five-shilling piece. I hold it aloft with outstretched arm, and it glitters bravely in the sun. The yells become uproarious. Like Sir Bedivere, "I strongly wheel and throw" the good old Portuguese bullion with its tinsel coat. A score of diving boys dash madly headlong in the waves. They fight! they struggle fathoms down! till, as the stately ship passes on, they rise again, and I hear their voluble execrations borne across the pellucid waters until they die away. I descend to luncheon

with a clear conscience, pondering on Edwin and the bird trick, to say nothing of the petty plunderings I myself have endured.

The ensuing seventeen days are spent at sea,

with the usual results of a fair weather voyage. The wild excitements of seeing a stray whale, a shoal of porpoises, and a passing ship, begin to pall upon one. Two things alone hold good, and they are worth a longer space of lifetime to experience than is expended in reaching Cape Town from Madeira. The sunrises and the sunsets! Their

glories are indescribable, and a Turner gazing

on them day in, day out, might well throw his colour-box overboard and weep at a sense of his own infinite insignificance.

At Cape Town we made our farewells, and were transferred to the "Anglian," in which, under that sound sailor, Captain Morton, we made our course for Delagoa Bay.

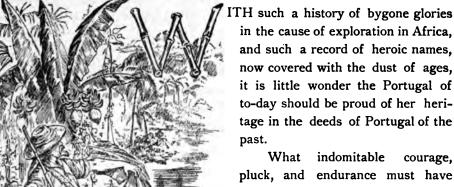
The stoppage at Durban was brief and storm-tossed; so should you, reader (gentle and otherwise), follow me through the rest of these folios, we will consider that pleasant place as it appeared when we returned. The red cliffs of Delagoa dawned upon us with the sunrise the morning after we cast anchor in the bay, and shortly I found my foot upon African soil under Portuguese "protection."

After a few hours in the genial company of Mr. Levers, the chief engineer of the "Anglian," and some pleasant introductions, I return to the water-side, and watch the burly form of my friend carried out to the ship's boat that awaits him to go aboard again to retrace his course towards England, home, and beauty. Turning, I saunter back listlessly to the Central Hotel, in the chief street of Lourenço Marques, the town of Delagoa Bay, where I must sojourn for a time. "Dear, dirty Dublin," they say of the capital of the Isle of Saints. Let me here write "Confoundedly dear, dirty Delagoa Bay," set in a land of loveliness, surrounded by rich, luxuriant vegetation, cursed with malaria, and given over to a lazy people who wallow in their filth, and cause the place to be a truly most undesirable one to sojourn in.



CHAPTER II.

DELAGOA BAY AND LOURENÇO MARQUES.



What indomitable courage, pluck, and endurance must have imbued those pioneers who, leaving their native land and facing the awful unknown, started for, and

eventually planted a chain of forts along, the coast of Africa, South and East, as landmarks of their country's possessions.

What toil, peril, and privation must have accompanied the transit of materials wherewith to build these rude but adamantine

monuments, which even now stand grimly dotted here and there upon the beautiful, wearying coast line.

Nothing daunted by the perils and hardships of the treacherous sea and dangerous shore, they pushed inland to raise more forts across the country, portions of which to-day may be seen canopied in sand, and, with their crude copyings of Moorish ornament, leading many travellers to believe them the remnants of an ancient, mighty people who may have occupied the country in ages past. I Breaking through gorgeous and wealthy fruit forests and poisonous undergrowths, they gazed upon the endless vista of beauty, many laying themselves down to die upon the sands they had conquered, a few returning, like gaunt, weird

beings of another world, to tell at home the wonderful tale of the Eldorado they had discovered, and to inspire and direct the operations of new bands of adventurers.

This glorious page of history is, however, blotted with stains of blood—the



blood of unfortunate natives, not only killed in fight, but tortured by these pioneers of civilisation, taking rest and making merry after the achievement of their labours. Their deeds of horror are handed down in song and dance to the present day amongst the natives.

It is difficult to see how—in the note sent by Senhor de Baros Gomes to Lord Salisbury, in answer to the British protest against the unwarrantable annexations and consequent disturbance and bloodshed in the Zambesi district—that the parading of the bones of intrepid

ancestors and their deeds, softened with the salve of the good acts of the "heroes

of the Faith" taken from history, can justify the acts of a demoralised swash-buckler, and the extended occupation of an effete people such as the Portuguese in South-East Africa have of late years proved themselves to be. The very tone of the said note of the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, eloquent as it may be, seems very like the raising of a hoarding, on which is written "Ancient Lights," in a place where progress and improvement bid fair to reclaim what as yet had been unused, or had, through neglect, fallen into dilapidation and decay. Furthermore, it challenges comparison,



and leaves us to marvel how the descendants (if they be such) of a glorious past should be a dissolute, immoral, and useless horde of squatters.

One has only at the present to compare the building of the fortifications of the past with the "jerry-built" defences of the Portuguese of South-East Africa of the present, who, with all the advantages of modern appliances, show themselves dead to, or determinedly set against, anything like advance, and to have settled down into defiling the rich and lovely land they for centuries have had occupation of, and demoralising the people under their control.

Their "pioneer of advance" has dwindled into a sickly soldier; their "hero of the Faith" I have known as a vendor of ardent spirits and money-lender to the Kaffirs.

As we enter Delagoa Bay, the setting sun is gilding the terra-cotta cliffs of Reuben Point, and making glorious the rich foliage colours that crest the headlands.



Gliding along into harbour, one is deeply impressed with the natural beauty of the bay, and its absolute adaptability to the purposes of maritime requirements. The broad expanse of the harbour, and the advantageous sea-front of Lourenço Marques, with the protecting line of hill overshadowing it, suggest the most fortunate and happy combination of circumstances to foster a prosperous maritime settlement. The sun has gone down, and as you gaze across the bulwarks in the cool clear darkness of the quiet winter evening (for it is now the

middle of May), at the twinkling lights of the town and the ships that stud the water-way, you feel very dubious as to the veracity of the travellers and chroniclers who have told you gruesome stories of this place.

The glories of a sunrise opalising the scene of your last night's contemplation and reflections only increase your curiosity and impatience to acquaint yourself with what, in the morning light, spreads before you a fairy scene of sparkling water and radiant landscape, and to give you opportunity of refuting the jaundiced tales of those who have been here before you. Seek not to judge

till you have known the occupants of this place in their habit as they live, and I warrant me you will ere long endorse what has been said, adding that matters have not improved, and are not improving as time goes on.

The aspect of Lourenço Marques, as you land upon its pier steps, is one

of it upon the mighty waters for many days. The pier is a slight wooden structure, with a flight of rather rickety steps placed at the shore end of it, which arrangement necessitates, during any condition of tide except high water, the not altogether pleasant acrobatic feat of riding from a boat to the quay-side on the shoulders of a nigger, who lunges about with an ambling gait that gives one, even though he be a good sailor, and thoroughly acquainted with the motion of the ocean, the sensation of having his head transformed into a Palais Royal balloon, and that he has been entirely divested of all anatomy from the midriff to the knee-caps, which his custodian is clutching tightly in front of him. On terra firma, a few moments' silent meditation recovers you, and you are able to

of pleasing variety to one who has been in anticipation

contemplate the "tuppence coloured" sky-blue frontage of the Customs and other official buildings—places with which you become unpleasantly intimate before long. To the right, as you face them, you are attracted by the movement of troops of Kaffirs, who are at work upon a sea-wall or new pier, or some such enterprise, which is being carried on in a piecemeal sort of manner by the powers that be. If noise and bustle would assist the gangs of workmen in accomplishing their task with "neatness and dispatch," surely this ought to prove a maritime monument before which a Liverpool or London dock might pale. Black overseers with sticks in their hands, are, with wild gesticulations and loud yells, commanding black workmen, who are in turn imprecating or chaffing each other. Above all these, including the overseers, a tan-coloured individual, with the superiority of having about twenty per cent. of Portuguese blood coursing in his veins, from a point of vantage on some elevated heap, now and then, removing a cigarette or cigar stump—which he smokes with the lighted

end in his mouth—gives vent to a string of some heterogeneous vocabulary that I question if he is quite capable of construing himself. The bark, however, is evidently worse than the bite with this person, for it seems only to remind some of the labourers that it is time to "squat" for a brief period, which they do; and, removing their snuff-boxes from their earholes, regale themselves with copious spoonfuls until the tears roll down their cheeks. On goes the work in this way, and, I should think, even the Portuguese genius at the head of public works would find it hard to tell how long it will go on. (I wonder if he remembers how long it is since it was commenced.) The negro workmen, carrying little boards of cement or slabs of stone on their heads, swing along their narrow pathreminding one of monster black ants in everything save that those most estimable insects would scorn to convey such comparatively trifling loads. Half an hour before sundown you may see negroes busy enough, for the labour of the day being over, they are collecting the staves of the cement barrels, which are not opened in the ordinary way of taking the top off, but burst to pieces by being thrown forcibly to the ground. These are their perquisites for firing, and with as much as they can carry on their heads, they are off home across the swamp, singing and dancing in a manner that makes the "bounding out of school" of Eugene Aram's four-and-twenty happy boys become veritable child's play.

And now to the Custom House to see the fate of your baggage, and to gain the bitter experience on this, the very threshold, that you are assuredly a stranger in a strange land. Here, under the roof of the long, shed-like room, are pitched in a most promiscuous manner a wonderful variety of goods and chattels—the owners of them, perhaps various and wonderful to your eye—standing, squatting, or sitting, awaiting the monkey-like investigations of the officals, who tear out and pitch about the belongings of the fresh arrivals. Customs investigations are not the most soothing operations, even in the best regulated countries; but in Portuguese Africa they are as outrageous as the extra duties imposed upon mere trifles. In our case, having a considerable supply of arms and ammunition, matters assume a very serious tone, and higher authorities than those performing the ordinary tasks of search are required. In fact, the function takes the form of a small military display, and even "his Excellency," the Governor, is brought into action. After much palaver and delay, to say nothing of breakneck "dues," the matter is successfully concluded.

Now let me pause for a moment before wading up the sandy track that does

duty for a street in the town of Lourenço Marques, and say a word concerning the Portuguese generally, before finding them in absolute control at this and other African settlements; for, truth to tell, it is no gentle hand that will guide the pen that records my experiences of them, both at this place and further afield.

At the opening season of this year of grace, one thousand eight hundred and ninety, it is a difficult thing to approach with calmness the subject of a petty power with whose yappings Her Britannic Majesty's Government is dealing with a firm though good-natured hand. Not that any feelings of indignation should be aroused at the attitude assumed by the wrong-headed portion of the populace of Lisbon and Oporto, regarding the warning finger which England has held up. The general feeling, indeed, would seem rather to be an admixture of pity, contempt, and amusement. I should fancy a census of English opinion might very well be given by the genial editor of Punch, if he were to reveal the multitudinous "suggestions for cartoons" that he must have received upon the subject. judge of the English nation by the doings of a rabble in Hyde Park or at Trafalgar Square would be a poor and inaccurate estimate; and, after all, the patriotism of some of the sons of "our ancient ally" can be good-naturedly borne with when the more level-headed take the action of the warning finger as a sign that brimstone and treacle may be an unpleasant mixture, but that if the brimstone must be swallowed, it is better in that form than mixed in gunpowder.

Those better informed than I am upon the subject bear testimony that the Portuguese are a valorous people, in no way lacking in courtesy and courage. I can only say that I have found in those of the higher class that I have come in contact with that this is the case; but I must add that a rooted objection to telling the truth—though lying may be a poetical accomplishment with them—is a universal failing. Even in the representatives of the Portuguese Government far afield, the courteous bearing is to be found, but only in the higher grade; but even then it is so imbued with the fictitious that it becomes to those who are misled by it an irksome ignis fatuus upon which to depend.

I have mentioned that the first impressions of the town fronting Delagoa Bay are somewhat pleasing. Further-on acquaintance with the up-town portions, this initiatory estimate rather improves. The stores are imposing and important, especially that of the English house of MacIntosh, Finlay, and Co., which is against the public square. That open space with its band stand, empty kiosks and dry fountain, appears somewhat picturesque with the Government buildings

flanking it; and would no doubt, with its groups of palms and orange trees, develop, with care and attention, into an inviting spot, had not the authorities, in their eagerness to illuminate the public offices with gas, put up a hideous gasometer and workshops between it and the sea-front, thus invading the picturesque, and destroying the chances of vegetation by the fumes from the retorts. In the town, the hotels are not bad, notably the American, where wanderers of that ilk and English most do congregate. The others are the Criterion, the Central, the Alexandra, and one or two minor establishments at the back portion of the town, which is chiefly occupied by the British Indians known as Banyans. With the exception of the American Hotel, however, all attempts at cleanliness and comfort are wofully lacking; and at this establishment alone is there to be found those most necessary adjuncts, a properly planted garden, with

well-shaded verandah and properly constructed sanitary offices. Central, which is mostly given over to the Portuguese, I had the misfortune to sojourn for a brief period.

A QUIET LITTLE GAME.

important and largest hostelry of the settlement. From the window of the dining-room, which looks out upon a small yard, in which is improvised an outdoor kitchen, and contains the only filthy and inadequate conveniences for the entire establish-

It is the most

ment, I have, while trying to eat some oily high-smelling condiment, witnessed the execution of a goat, with the immediate disembowelling of the same, effected with brutal deliberation by a couple of black scullions! Overlooking this yard, and commanding a view of the well-built yard and out-houses, where a thriving trader of Portuguese nationality keeps, or kept when I was there, a large assortment of fine-looking Kaffir "wives" ("a large assortment always kept on hand"), is

a small wooden verandah. This is the only harbour of refuge for those occupying the hotel, unless they care to spend their time in the billiard-room—a fine spacious one, sublet to an Englishman, but made well-nigh unbearable from the loud and incessant jabber of the young Portuguese officers and "Capitaes Mores," as the officials are termed, who constantly occupy themselves at the French cannon-billiard table. Here I once had the felicity of seeing the redoubtable Serpa Pinto teaching some young military ideas how to shoot; and if a Gatling gun is not a much easier game than French billiards, I think he must have achieved but little success in his attack upon the Makololos.

The settlement of Delagoa Bay, it would seem, was originally separated from the mainland by swamp. This has, to some extent, been filled in, but in such an insufficient manner, and by the burying under it of all poisonous growth, that it forms the hot bed of the malaria and miasma, which, as the sun dies in the gorgeous western sky, rise heavily from their lair, and in a thick, pestiferous fog drag themselves languidly down through the streets of Lourenço Marques towards the sea, making it the dangerous fever den it is.

Upon this swampy land, so please you, the thoughtful possessors of the soil have built them a botanical garden. In this is a pretty sheet of water, shaded by waving palms and gorgeously flowered trees, and from its bosom a privileged few draw water—concentrated liquid essence of the poisons that surround it—for domestic purposes.

Up here, to the right as you ascend the hill, is placed the square ginger-bread powder-magazine, in such a position that it would seem from the bay as though an easily directed shell from a gunboat could not fail to drop into it, and materially alter the architectural appearance of that portion of the town occupied by the civil and military power of His Most Faithful Christian Majesty of Portugal. To the left, in the sand tracks that acquaint you that you are no longer on buried swamp, but commencing the hillside, is the English burial-ground. A sadder or more forbidding place no one could well look for within the pale of even so-called civilization, in which to bury their dead. An arid waste of sand, without tree or shrub to throw even the sparsest shadow. No monumental marble here, and but few stucco tombs amidst an array of innumerable black labels, bearing the number of him or her that lies beneath.

It was my melancholy lot to attend the funeral of an English lady, one of the few gentlewomen of her country who had braved a residence in this place, where





she had a welcome for her compatriots at "the English Library." I only knew her for a brief space, when she fell a victim to the fever. The funeral was, of necessity, "furnished" by the Portuguese undertaker, otherwise the authorities would put endless obstacles in the way of those to whom she was dear, and who would like to observe the last rites with tenderness and decency. The hearse was a common bullock-cart, and as I trudged through the heavy sand under the pitiless sun, I talked with one of much experience in these melancholy ceremonies—one whom I had known in London, and whom I was glad and proud to find had, thanks to his fine constitution, weathered the dreadful climate of the land of his adoption, and who, through his constant practical acts of kindness, had endeared himself to many, and become known as "The White Man of Delagoa Bay." I cannot refrain mentioning his name, though he might soundly rate me for doing so; but a few out of the many that he has helped when "in a difficult place" may read this, and I know will join me in saying, may "Bill" Giles live long and prosper. He told me of the ghastly sights he had witnessed, when the fever-stricken were dying in dozens, during the bad season, and were carted in groups to the graves; how the registration labels were put up and entered in such a lax manner that—in his own words—"I commenced a record of those I had known, lest inquiry might be made by friends, and they might fail to find the graves of those they sought. I kept it for nearly a month; but when it reached a hundred I got sick of the self-imposed horrible task and gave it up."

When we reached the place of the dead, the coffin was placed upon trestles. Mr. Philip Knee, the then British Vice-Consul, was there to read the service, which he did with a clear, impressive voice. During these solemn moments the Portuguese undertaker and his assistant were not idle, for, elbowing the chief mourners aside, the one unscrewed the lid of the coffin and removed it, when the other dashed into it a bucketful of quicklime over the face and body of the corpse, and with much bustle and noise returned the lid and screwed it down again. As I wandered down into the town I tried to think of Gray's "Elegy," and the green resting-places in England that held many friends whom I had seen laid there in peace and with quiet reverence; but my heart was sore with the gruesome "precautions" I had seen performed with such callous brutality under foreign rule, and my head was sick with the beating midday sun, so that I was fain to seck the shelter of one of the sheds of the English railway, and, looking out across the

dazzling waters, try with the aid of tobacco to soothe myself into a more peaceable frame of mind and forgetfulness.

Out in the bay there, what a glorious place it seems! and the breeze comes in with its fresh breath, sighing to the land, "Why are you so foul, why so implacable in your estimate of man?" I will arise and go unto you, O sea! thought I; and before long, with a congenial companion, I am in the dingy, and, with sails all taut, we are soon plashing and dipping away past the vessels at anchor, past a cunning-looking dhow with her huge sail, making for the open; away, plunging and raking past wreckage lumbering the harbour and endangering shipping; past fishermen of the opposite shore, plying their homeward paddles to the strange, weird boat songs they are singing. Now the breath of heaven is indeed a balm, and as we steer from the harbour up one of the creeks, the lazy pelicans on the branches of the submerged trees open their great bills and flap their dazzling wings till, with the lurid glare and vivid colour of everything, it all seems mystic and wonderful to an unaccustomed eye.

When the Portuguese selected what is now Delagoa Bay as a resting-place and point of vantage, they cautiously planted themselves well down by the sea, with the swamp cutting off the chances of unexpected molestation from the inhabitants of the mainland, of whose savage nature and power they had but an imperfect and exaggerated idea. It would appear that it was not until explorers and visitors from other nations came amongst them that they hit upon changing this dangerous defence of theirs into a more substantial and apparently habitable place, and ingeniously constructed the seductive botanical patch, in the hope that the new-comers might settle upon it and drink in disease and death with their breath and sustenance. What was their surprise and chagrin to find that those especially the English who came—had the daring to cross this pleasant trap, and with audacity mount the hillside into the very jaws of the country of the savage natives and set up their houses upon its summit, where the air, albeit hot, was purer and fresher than below, even in their own sea-beaten fastness. not to the present followed this enterprise to any extent. The Portuguese chapel is built some little way up the hill. Even this situation is an effort to visit on the part of its patrons, and seldom accomplished except in a Manchello. Near the sacred edifice are erected some religious institutions and iron huts for emigrants; but beyond this point I do not think any Portuguese of circumstance has had the energy to go, except the Port Captain, an accomplished gentleman, whose wide

experience of the world gives him more title to the term of cosmopolitan than the majority of his countrymen. He has mounted the hill and built him a charming villa, with a fine photographic studio, of which art he is an admirable amateur. From these surroundings he seems not to care much to move, except on his duty errands, and then he is mostly aboard his yacht.

Up here is the splendid building of the Eastern Telegraph, and above Reuben Point the only English-looking house, conspicuous from its two chimney stacks, built by Mr. Philip Knee, in which I have spent many happy, healthy days and delightful evenings, innocent of the existence of the physical and moral foulness lying beneath us at the foot of the hill. In the next chapter it will be more appropriate to deal with the advantages of the perch upon which Mr. Knee, known as "King Knee," thought fit to build his castle, which by this time, I suppose, is given over with the other "effects" of the railway to the Portuguese.

I will not dwell upon the horrors of the sick house and the inadequacy of medical assistance in the place now that that skilful and courteous English gentleman, Dr. Herbert Edgelow, has elected to make his exit, with the other human "possibilities," at the conclusion of the railway episode. I will merely quote from a letter which is before me. It speaks in a too bitterly prophetic tone; for the writer—a highly-accomplished literary lady of Enlgish birth—died, I understand, a few days after it was written:—

"' The Hospital,' Lourenço Marques,
"July 11th, 1889.

"DEAR MR. MACKAY,

"Nothing makes me regret my position so much as the inability it places me in to meet you. Life, precarious everywhere, does not even hang on the proverbial 'thread' here. I hope soon to be able to move about again; but what with tincture of mustard, which causes the nurse and myself bitter tears on each application, medicine, and quinine, I feel as though, if my illness does not send me over to the majority, the doctor will."

Thus the only two gentlewomen of English birth that I knew aught of, and the only two I heard of as being in Delagoa Bay, died in the term of my brief sojourn there. Pause, O ye gentlemen of England that sit at home in ease, or otherwise, before you decide on bringing the partner of your joys and sorrows, and mayhap your family, to such a place as this!

No medicine is procurable except from the accredited doctor of the Government, as a chemist's is, I believe, disallowed, save in that form; and even then it must be entirely at the decision of the practitioner in what form and of what it shall be compounded. So much for medicines. As to poisons, you have not to seek far to procure them; any dram shop will supply you at a moment's notice. These concoctions are not marked with a warning label or a skull and crossbones,



LANDING "MISSIONARIES."

but bear pleasing inscriptions, such as "Brandy," "Whiskey," "Gin," and the like.

The liquor traffic in gin for consumption by the Kaffirs "up country" through this port is really something appalling, and it would be hard to say how and where it will end in its results upon its wretched victims, if by some means it cannot be checked. "Be checked?" Aye,there's It is the the rub! most powerful ambassador, the most powerful general, and the strongest army with which the faithful subjects of "His Most Christian Majesty Dom Carlos of Portugal" are to-day marching all

through South-Eastern Africa and quelling the natives. We have International Anti-Slavery Congresses, Amelioration Societies, missionary stampedes at Exeter

Hall, tea-meetings and bunfights in every parish from Land's End to John o' Groats, all for the sake of the poor heathen, who is being all the time slowly but surely and continuously swallowed up by the hell water that he is being induced to swallow by the "pioneers of civilization." Surely there is something international in this soul and body destroying business? The dreadful stuff imported in vast quantities under the name of "gin" is manufactured in Holland, and is carried to Africa by German, French, American, and English—ay, English—ships; and I warrant me that with all her high falutin' patriotic "boycotting" of British vessels Portugal will stand on so high a pedestal of wrath at Lisbon as to overlook this little matter in her colonies.

While I was in Delagoa Bay I was "approached" by a merchant on the matter of what a beautiful picture a stack of demijohns of "Kaffir gin" would make in his store. A fee for its appearance in an English paper was, indeed, suggested. Through the powerful medium of the *Illustrated London News*, I have been able to ventilate this subject in more than one sketch; but not at all from the point of view contemplated by the worthy "merchant," who will, I should think, be mightily surprised should he see and read my little efforts. I have not received that fee.

The occasion that this refers to was when a ship came in with a cargo of nine thousand demijohns of Hollands gin—satirically termed missionaries. It was a sight to see the childish glee of the great nigger "boys" as they ploughed through the water to and from the lighters which brought the merchandise from the outlying steamer. Here he comes with his load of bottled devastation on his head—the precious stuff is "fifty-six over proof" in strength, and when "rectified" and diluted with some local decoction and bad water by its vendor, what mischief may not one missionary demijohn achieve? See the swing of his arms and the flash of his white teeth (filed into pointed tusks in the centre) as he buoyantly chaffs his comrades wading behind him.

The Kaffir, always susceptible to the influence of strong drink, is sufficiently difficult to manage when intoxicated with his own home-brewed brothy-looking, sour-tasting beer, or the more subtle distillations that civilization has taught him to extract from the cachu and other fruits; but with bad whiskey, rum, and this, worst of all, Hollands gin—which I can testify, from a very small dose, is the most nauseating, burning, racking, hell-fire water that can well be enrolled under the title of spirituous liquor—he is an utter impossibility. It maddens him, his wits leave him, his brain closes down, and with flaming bloodshot eyes he sees

nothing but blood. Blood he must and will have, and fortified with drink, "Blood! blood! " is his cry as he sallies forth in his thousands to obtain blood, which he most assuredly does.

Note.—Since writing above I have read in Major Serpa Pinto's, "How I Crossed Africa," as tollows: "I begged them to dance themselves, but they gave me to know that their dignity would not allow of such a proceeding, it being contrary to all established rule. I ardently desired, however, to see Bahita capering in petticoats and a minister's uniform, and aware of the power of liquor over the negro, I gave instructions that a fresh bottle should be presented to their Majesties.

This was quite enough. Laws and established rules were soon cast to the winds, and I had the delight to see them all join in a grotesque dance in the midst of their people, who, fired with enthusiasm at the sight, rolled about and went through such violent contortions that one would have thought they had all gone into fits or were afflicted with some kind of madness. Bahita was simply grand, and I cannot help thinking that the roi Bobèche must have been created after some such model. In his excitement he talked of nothing but ordering people's heads to be cut off, sentences which those around him listened to with the utmost apparent submission, with their tongues in their cheeks all the time, as they knew full well the Portuguese Government would allow no tricks of that kind within their jurisdiction."

CHAPTER III.

THE DELAGOA BAY RAILWAY WAR.

a rare metamorphosis in the circumstances of atmosphere that he has left below him in Lourenço Marques. And, as has been indicated, up here I found it so when, in answer to a cordial invitation, I presented myself at the gateway of the plantation surrounding the English-looking edifice known as Sea View House, on the evening of Saturday, June 22nd, 1889. Circumstances over which I had no control—to use an expression most inclusive and convenient in the accidents of this uncertain life—had caused me an enforced stay at Lourenço Marques. Uncertainty, anxiety, and the surroundings indicated in the preceding chapter, caused me to understand prac-

the top of Reuben Point, Delagoa Bay, the weary sojourner will find

tically what is really meant by "the complaint of the country," and I fell ill of a fever. My friend, Lieutenant Sugden, R.N., who was placed in like circumstances, was conducting a fever on his own account in an adjacent room of the Central Hotel. Our medical sheet anchor, Dr. Milson Roberts, had, with the rest of our expedition, been almost, it seemed, spirited away; and, like Touchstone's friendly shepherd, I was in a "parlous condition."

The sensations of this complaint, so apparently unavoidable, under even the most favourable circumstances, are not pleasant; and I am not going to harass my own memory with it, or burden my readers' patience with any record of it here beyond saying that I fancy anyone who has indulged in a pretty sharp attack of the "influenza epidemic" here will have had a fair notion of it in its milder forms,

with the difference of atmospheric surroundings—in the one case the intolerable heat, and in the other the extremity of cold, which, by the way, we had when the sun ceased to shine each day, it being the African winter season.

One fine morning, feeling sufficiently nerved to "make an effort," to live, such as Mrs. Dombey was urged to make, I crawled out with the resolve—as firm a one as my condition would permit—to call upon Dr. Edgelow, who occupied the British Consulate House. Blessed hour that such an inspiration should have come upon me in my enfeebled condition. I found the good Esculapian seated in his cool, shady bungalow, and after being made cordially welcome, I was duly



21/6/89.

diagnosed, and with the pleasant roundings of English books, papers, and pictures, I began to feel that life was perhaps not quite so hopeless as the few days I had just passed through had caused it to appear. Stretched in a large lounging chair, I turned over the familiar pages of the London papers, which I had not seen, it seemed, for such a very long time. I watched the doctor as he tended the halt, the lame, and the feverstricken as they passed under his skilful Most of these were from the ranks of men employed in the railway and on the works, and most of them showed at what frightful odds such work is carried on under the various influences of the antagonistic climate.

The morning's work over, a pleasant chat over a pleasant breakfast, and the doctor sallied forth on his daily rounds, charging me to do just as I pleased, and leaving me monarch of all I surveyed in the pleasant seclusion of his sanctum, a situation which I showed my appreciation of by absolutely obeying his commands.

Towards the afternoon my host returned, and preparations for the tea of that

period of the day were put in progress. A good cup of tea in these parts is as rare as it is refreshing, and the doctor was justly noted for the best brew in the whole settlement. Enter to the syposium a hearty, thorough Englishman, to whom I am duly presented, and find myself in a very brief period in pleasant converse with my Consul, Mr. Philip Knee. It did not take long to refresh this genial gentleman, and with a cheery word and an expressive slap of the riding crop on his gaiter, he said farewell, adding, with a most imposing bow and sweep of the hand that held his sun-helmet, "So please you, I am going to interview his Excellency the Governor," and with a chuckle departed. A lazy couple of hours brought about the cosy dinner, and the lighted lamps shone down on certainly as inviting a board as one need wish to sit at, under the influence of a genuine welcome in a foreign land. I slept well that night, and woke much refreshed, to find the following letter, which had been sent to my hotel the evening before, but with characteristic delay on the part of the Portuguese hotel porter, had not been delivered until the morning after:—

"Lourenço Marques and Transvaal Railway, Limited, "21/6/89.

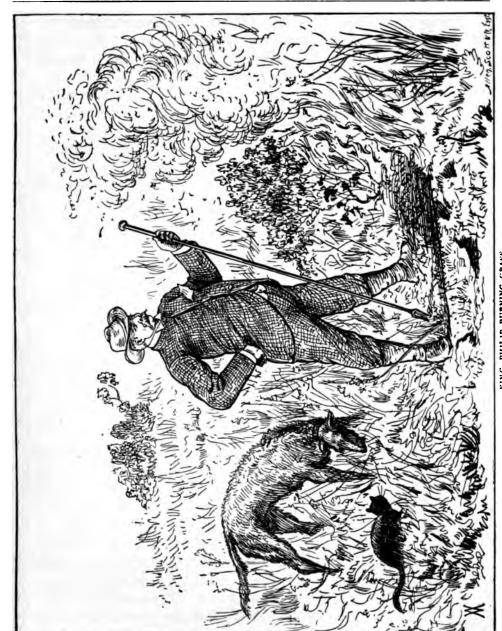
"DEAR SIR,

"Why not give me the pleasure of seeing you at Sea View House? If I send a machialo for you, what time on Saturday will you be ready for the boys to carry you up? It is very agreeable up there just now. Do come.

"Yours very truly,
"Philip Knee."

This being Saturday, there was no time to be lost in answering the courtesy, so I made stir to again call upon my friend Dr. Edgelow, and was nothing loth to accept the proposal that I should again observe the regime of making myself at home in his place as on the day previous, while he would send an answer to our friend Knee that we would walk up to Sea View in the afternoon in time for dinner. The world had gone so well with me during the past twenty-four hours that all notion of being carried up the hill in a machialo was at once dismissed, and I looked forward to the walk, notwithstanding that I still had a lurking knowledge of the weakness of my limbs. After another restful day, and more refreshing afternoon tea, I was ready for the road.





Across the swampland we went, up the side of the hill, past the Portuguese church, with its glaring white walls picked out with blue, and its quaint little spire, from which the Angelus bell was tinkling out its prayer time.

Along the road to the right as we gain the top, and just a moment for breathing

and a look across the glorious sea, painted so brilliantly by the setting sun. How distinctly the sounds rise from the town below—the blowing of the military bugles, the calls of some early and fervent worshippers, as they wend their way to the little stucco mosque in the swamp ground, for Allah to come down. What peculations can these faithful ones have achieved to-day that Allah should be summoned thus early? Along the sandy road again, here and there in extended patches made as hard and smooth as asphalte by the operations of the red ants. Now the grateful shade of tall trees on each side offers itself for the rest of the stretch of



road that we have to traverse. Yonder is a Kaffir urchin setting his monkey-trap for his night's sport, while his junior utilises an old meattin as a tom-tom. A small kraal is pointed out to me as that owned by "Spotted Horse," Brown, and Mike O'Donel, and it contains, I understand, amongst other beauties of the harem, some of the young ladies who did duty as Zulu Princesses at the Westminster Aquarium some years ago. Any that are visible greet "The "Doc" with pleasant salutation, for he is a frequent visitor up the hill and a prime Now we pass the fine buildings of the Eastern Telegraph Company; and from the extremity of the grounds of this place along the road commences the wire fencing of Sea View. On the gateway of this place is an imposing black boarding, on which is written, in large white lettering, the announcement that it is Sea View, and that it is the residence of Mr. Philip Knee, and further informing those whom it may concern that trespassing is not permitted. This is quite clearly and explicitly set forth in English; but the Portuguese version of it which runs side by side with it is, through the peculiar knowledge of that language possessed by the artist who painted it up, I believe, of such a "monarch-of-all-lsurvey" turn that it won for the innocent object of it the appellation of "King." Hence it was that the British Vice-Consul was known universally as "King Philip." Under this portentous announcement we enter the domain of the King, and after a couple of minutes' walk we discover his Majesty occupying himself burning the long dry grass, attended by his faithful subjects, a wiry-haired dog and a restless little black cat, that lures "Juno," the dog, to feats of swiftness every now and again, as we wend our way to the house.

The lurid light of the sunset has rapidly died out, and the night is closing in as we come up to the house with its ample "stoup," on which are placed inviting lounging chairs, protected by a deep awning roof from the sun, and by glass-panelled screens to prevent the treacherous corner draughts that might make an evening siesta a risky luxury.

A wash and a glass of Amontillado after the walk make the announcement of "dinner," given by "Panda," the well-set ebony major domo of the *ménage*, a welcome item of information.

I warrant me that I at least can testify—that triangle dinner party on the hill overlooking Delagoa Bay that night was a pleasant group. Conversation. discursive at the outset, naturally settled down upon the burning topic of the hour and day in this corner of the world—that of the taking over of the English railway by the Portuguese, which operation was to take place on the following Monday, June 24th, according to the international covenant, I believe, hinging on the fact that the engineering work and laying of the rails to their final limit were not completed by that date. Mr. Philip Knee, holding the somewhat unique dual position of general manager of the railway and that of British Vice-Consul—the only Consul at Delagoa Bay representing England-offered a somewhat more difficult case than has generally met the Portuguese. When they want to annex anything, if it is only a travelling bag, they will try to do so by elaborate chicanery if they cannot have it for the mere taking. Here was a very different matter, and highly entertaining were our worthy host's descriptions of interviews with his Excellency the Governor and others high in authority, who were all concentrating their attention upon this momentous event. His Excellency, a courteous gentleman, who had spent some five years as an officer in the English Navy, must, I fancy, have privately enjoyed his ceremonious interviews with the Consular manager of the railway, each being determined from his own standpoint not to give the other a chance of "pulling his leg" in the matter of diplomacy.

Dinner and many other matters having been discussed, "Panda" is summoned to be put through his facings for to-morrow's duties.

Master: Have you and the boys had their dinner?

Panda: Yis, sa.

Master: Have you fed the dog and the cat, and has Bob seen to the horse?

Panda: Yis, sa.

Master: Have you filled the boiler?

Panda: Yis, sa.

Master: Have you any money, and are you going to market in the morning?

Panda: Yis, sa.

Master: You will see that this gentleman, who is going to stay here, wants for nothing during my absence. (Panda bows.) Would Panda like to go to bed?

Panda: Yis, sa; thankee. Master: Good night, Panda.

Panda: Good night, sa. (Exit with a low obeisance to us all.)

This simple record shows the true mode of treating your "boys" in Africa if they are not of the lowest type. Forbearance and gentleness, with simplicity of directions, my friend the "King" assured me, are worth all the hectoring and belabouring you can bestow upon them; and most assuredly my experience of his establishment convinced me that he was right. We now emerge upon the stoup for a final smoke and "nightcap" of whiskey and Hartz water, a concoction which, taken sparingly and at the right time, is a valuable weapon wherewith to foil malaria or ague. Here, wrapped in great-coats to keep out the chill night air, we sit and chat, and laugh, and smoke, and gaze upon the vivid firmament until bed-time; and I find myself ensconced beneath an ample canopy of mosquito curtains, feeling intense relief and gratitude for this pleasant form of deliverance from the land below. A very bearing up from the pit of Tophet to a heavenly altitude, and such quiet waking thoughts merge themselves into pleasant slumber.

The bright Sunday morning broke upon me with the cheery voice of the monarch of Sea View as he hoisted the Union Jack on the verandah. "The morning tonic" was the title given to this piece of bunting as it fluttered in the early fresh breeze—"Just to show them we are still here," being the explanation of mine host. "It may not be for long, but while we are we will have an ensign—in fact, two ensigns, old chap!" as he laughingly pointed to a boy in the grass below, who, at the signal of his master's voice, was staggering under the weight

of a long pole on which was affixed a larger Union Jack, which in a few minutes, the pole having been fixed in the stump of a tree, was also fluttering out its nationality.

After breakfast the doctor proceeded down the hill to attend to his patients, and as time was precious to Mr. Consul-Manager, and cipher cablegrams that are to convey much are matters that require quiet, I elect to take a walk round the domain of Sea View.

Leaving my host in company with a stack of code books, despatches, and other business paraphernalia, I wander forth into the dazzling sunlight. A very cursory inspection shows how perfectly the place has been planned for comfort

and health. The kitchen house stands well away from the house proper, and so do the bath-room and other domestic offices. A large water reservoir of concrete, with thick concrete covering, holds the precious fluid underground, cool

and safe from contamination. The situation is well chosen: for the trees that are about it, though not too abundant, are large and luxurious, and offer shelter and shade. Further away from the house are the stables, where I see the faithful little horse taking his Sunday rest; and next to these is the Kaffir house. wander to the limitations of the enclosure—no small one—and, taking the open, break into the

country on the hilltop skirting the sea, which stretches calmly out before me, only dancing with a shimmer in the bright sun, and taking curious shapes and shades, like huge moving seaserpents, where the currents affect it.



VENUS IN A CABBAGE GARDEN.

Through the long drv grass I brush, every movement raising myriads of gorgeously-coloured butterflies and small birds, making a screeching and humming as if the end of the world had come; while the incessant "chaffing" of the huge grasshoppers, in their magnificent crimson uniforms, is like the whirring of a distant grinding factory. Out on to an open road, and across to look down the cliffs, which are in a steep and direct line down to the sea at this point. How tiny the town and the ships appear to be, but so clearly defined and vivid that I seem to be looking through a pair of field glasses reversed. Taking the road again, I pass the signalling station over Reuben Point, where patches of cultivation are discernible. All is very still and calm; no sound but the insects and the birds. I seem to be quite alone in the land, until, turning to my left, past a clump of trees, I come across a small Kaffir settlement, and nearly tumble over a lanky old woman weeding a garden patch. I do not know whether she or I be the more startled at my sudden interruption; but, uttering some gutturals, she ambles off on all fours, her long leathery paps hanging down to the earth. A yell of laughter apprises me that a little farther on is a group of other and more favoured females;

and "How do, John?" from a large negress, who has just straightened herself up in a cabbage patch, acquaints me with the fact that I am not only under their rapid scrutiny, but that keen observation has decided my nationality at a glance. I interview this Venus of the cabbage garden, and reward her conversational endeavours and request for a "tickee" (threepenny bit) with a coin approaching it, and with some tobacco, which she immediately proceeds to smoke, with ejaculations of "Ach! gooda!" This beauty was the tallest Kaffir woman I had seen or have seen since, and although engaged in a very humble form of



agricultural pursuit, affected considerable personal adornment in the shape of bangles and earrings.

I began to retrace my steps, and, after some tea, the doctor having returned, we joined our host in his grass-burning expedition, and the rest of the day and evening was passed in the manner of the previous one, conversation still holding the form of speculation as to what the Portuguese tactics would be concerning the railway which on the morrow they were supposed to seize. And so to bed.

I looked out upon the fresh morning, and could scarcely realise that two days before I had wearily gazed on the arid sand street of Lourenço Marques in a weary state of fever and depression. The deep green foliage of the trees and the waving grass, intermixed with brilliant patches of wild flowers, all seemed such a transformation. "Bob" was busy grooming the King's steed, Juno and the cat were trifling with the quiet meditations of an ancient-looking grey donkey—a wonderful investment of the doctor's, whose chief speculations, now that he had got it, were "What am I to do with the brute?"

Coming down, I found my host in his usual state of good spirits, notwith-standing the anxious crisis approaching, in which he played so important a part with so much moral courage and determination. He had that great gift, so invaluable in a country like Africa, of being able to see the humorous side of a subject while grasping firmly the serious. After some early coffee and a biscuit, he was eager and ready for the fray, and as he rode off to have his audience with "his Excellency" the Governor, his very back seemed laughing at the attitude of affairs. We cheered him with a hearty good wish or two, and as he turned to wave adieu, he seemed more in the purpose of the cavalier gentleman in the song, of whom the glee boys at Evans's old supper rooms used to sing so sweetly—

"O, who will o'er the downs so free,

O, who will with me ride;

O, who will o'er the downs with me

To win a blooming bride?"

—than a stranger in a strange country, bent on fighting at fearful odds the interests of the company he represented and the country that he served.

The doctor and I, as we walked down the hill, could hear the tootling of the bugles, and espy the steam from the engine making ready to start on its usual eight o'clock journey to Barberton. Bunting was to be seen flying from many flagstaffs that are not daily decorated, and as we neared the church, the sound of the bell, and the lounging up of groups in military uniform, at first suggested that something unusual was going forward. However, as Sundays and saints' days are

very numerous in the Portuguese calendar, it was soon apparent that this was one of the latter festivals, and as usual held in holiday.

This I found, on reaching the town, was sufficient reason for the postponing of the railway episode. Matters were, however, taking a rather grave turn. The Portuguese had been busy with their assumption of what they were pleased to look upon as a victory over their dearly hated English fellow-townsmen. This feeling was plainly evinced by the attitude of the miserable-looking undersized military police, who wander in couples along the streets armed with short swords and revolvers, smoking cigarettes and spitting indiscriminately; and I heard many accounts of the difficulty the English—especially those connected with the railway and its works-experienced in keeping their tempers under the trying circumstances. The general manager, however, and the English Vice-Consul had in one and the same voice urged the British subjects to refrain from retaliating, and to show as much good-tempered forbearance as possible with their opponents. This, indeed, at any time, or under the most favourable circumstances, would be a difficult task; but it was loyally and thoroughly carried out, for though I made every inquiry, I could not hear of any one breach of the peace in which an English subject was concerned. One could not judge from a few cases of men being thrown into "tronk" for a few hours, as this is likely to occur at all times, and is carried out on the slightest pretext; and frequently, without any provocation or cause whatever, a man will be found in durance vile simply because some wretched Portuguese or black soldier had taken him before a "sergento," who had ordered him to be locked in "tronk" until inquiries had been made, and as likely as not either forget or wilfully neglect to make any move in the matter of such inquiries. The pie-crust may have been cool and sugar-coated at this time, but the fruit beneath was thoroughly heated, and a very slight pressure would have sufficed to break the film and let it steam out.

Seldom, I think, have a few highly provoked Britishers, under the influences of a climate that is warranted to try the most model tempers, and turn the milk of human kindness into the gall of irritability, and the constant rubbing against an offensively objectionable people, who claim a superiority—though they have it not—shown a greater amount of resolution to be calm and passive (most difficult of occupations) than did the handful of men connected with the railway at Delagoa Bay during this its transition stage. Curses there were, but not loud, however deep they may have been, and as a rule the men got through them

indoors between times, and made the best of a very unpleasant position. The engineers and other practical employés of the railway company generally betook themselves at nightfall to the Criterion Hotel, where they would meet other congenial spirits of British extraction, if of a rough at the same time of a ready nature, and honest and cheery withal.

Here conviviality proceeded during the evenings prior to the final transfer of the line into Portuguese possession. Mrs. Bruce, acting as their "tall Titan" Hebe, would minister to their comforts, and indignation would merge into conviviality, this not unnaturally finding vent in song. They had a poet to look after their feelings and give material form to the subjects of their sorrow, and with such advantages many ditties, with choruses convenient to all ages and conditions, the whole fitted to some popular air, would be trolled out and chorussed again and again, giving the singers no end of relief in their sanctuary, and doing the Portuguese no harm. I can only remember the burden of one of their pæans, which ran—

"The railway we will loose,
To the dirty Portugoose,
For which we're not in any way to blame.
So it matters not to me
If the —— Portugee
Should carry on the same old train!"

Perhaps here and there a happy digression would be made, and patriotism evince itself by asserting that until the line was taken, the English would "carry on the same old train," a happy thought that necessarily required much noise and more refreshment.

"And jolly Philip Knee
Very sure may be,
We'll carry on the same old train."

Meantime there was a considerable scare as to the safety of women, children, and property, and strong representations were made to the Consul as to gaining protection, and the cables in various directions were set in motion again, including imperative requests to the home Government.

At last came the finale of the matter. His Excellency assured the consular manager that he would have the line if he had to seize it by force; to which with all politeness, the Englishman assured him in return that he would work the train until the lines were torn up, further imparting the interesting information that the arrival of English gunboats was imminent.

Flaming language in a local Portuguese broadsheet pointed out to its reader^S what miserable uneducated dogs the English were, and the editorial flambeau flashed forth in praises of the high prestige of its countrymen, and pointed to the glorious victory that was pending.

The news had spread up country, and we had word of a body of some four hundred miners riding down from Barberton to protect their rights and the lives of their friends and countrymen. These, with a group of bluejackets from the gunboats, would very shortly have decided the question of prestige in that part of the country. But it was not to be, and the only action directed from headquarters was "Show firm but dignified resistance." Rather a vague attitude to be suggested under the very difficult circumstances.

Up the hill, where everything was so peaceful and calm, matters were varied one fine morning by the arrival of a posse of soldiers, one of them bearing a document of formidable proportions, gay with official seals. It turned out to be no less than an intimation to Mr. Knee that he might consider himself a prisoner in his own house.

This was, indeed, a new departure, and one that made the edict, "Show firm but dignified resistance," seem still more obscure in its bearing. We used to sing with considerable ardour in my school, and I expect the refrain was as common and popular a property in every school in the kingdom—I even remember a fair-haired damsel of some seven summers, in those days, lisping it out to finger-exercise, between "Trab, trab," and "The Heavens are telling":

One skinny Frenchman, two Portugee, One jolly Englishman can lick the whole three!

Here was one jolly Englishman supposed to lick scores of Portuguese, and a French man-of-war lying in the harbour for some wise purpose of its own. There was nothing for it but to accept the inevitable. The port captain, who had always showed signs of regard for my host, came across in a most picturesque costume, looking for all the world like a miniature Velasquez, stepped out of its frame, to find the cause of the display. On finding it, he contented himself with shrugging his shoulders, and, with a sweeping action of the hands—meant to indicate the populace down the hill—said sneeringly in French, "I have ceased to be surprised at anything they do."

I hurried down the hill to see if there was anything that I, up till then, a free and independent person, could do. As I descended I could hear the busy bugles

blowing, and, on nearer approach to the fort, could plainly hear the dull whack of the "shambock" as it came across some miserable black Portuguese soldier's back, and was answered at every stroke by his deep-noted groan.

Down in the bright morning light, by the offices of the Public Works, I could see, clad in snowy linens, Major Aroujo alighting from his machealo. I bethought me of having a courteous ten minutes with the gallant chief of the Government works, more especially as he doubtless would be practically connected with the railway seizure.

I found him most affable in his assurances that His Honour Consul Knee had his deepest sympathy and consideration, and that he would be seeing His Excellency the Governor immediately, and interest himself in the matter in question. Now, this was the morning of the 29th, and very busy all appeared to be in the town, more especially in the neighbourhood of the railway station; and the last scene of all in this strange eventful history of a railway company, if it did not involve, as it did, loss of thousands on thousands to English and American shareholders, and universal indignity to those connected with the work, would have been a fit subject for an opera bouffe libretto. Bugle calls there were sufficient to make an orchestra and its music highly diverting in its variations. When the black soldier gets possession of a wind instrument in his martial capacity he is capable of some wonderful performances, and surprising results. The morning in question was one of rare opportunity for him, as well as his less-lunged saffron-coloured brother, the Portuguese proper.

The conditions of climate necessitate early hours at both ends of the days and it was, therefore, by this time still lacking the hour of eight. The train was ready, steam was evidently at a high pressure, as also were the feelings of the young heroes of England who represented the railway staff. The rights and wrongs of this event have been retailed and detailed. Matters have been arbitrated—or, while I write, are undergoing arbitration—on behalf of those connected with the matter, both American and English. All I purpose doing is here setting down what I witnessed in the matter.

Those responsible for the train up to this period had, as I have indicated, been holding conclaves of a more or less ardent nature, and had arrived at the station on this, their culminatory occasion, evidently resolved to die hard, and with their harness on their backs.

The military element of the Portuguese was very much on evidence in and

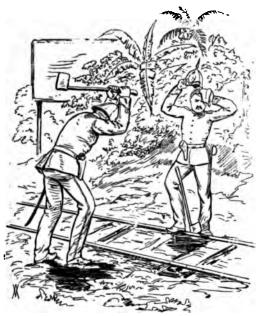
about the station; from the Commandant down, every man was in his "Sunday best." There were marchings and counter marchings, all carried out by the whispered councils of sergentos and buglers.

The Englishmen, on their part, were not idle. Rigby, the driving engineer for the day, had mounted his post on the engine with the stoker and several other willing hands. A most ingenious and at the same time a somewhat hazardous move was made by the railway hands. On a siding, awaiting removal to the mines up the line, was a large case of dynamite packed securely in concrete iron. This was shunted and coupled on in front of the engine. Reckless of results to themselves, it was their intention to make some sort of journey, even should it prove in every sense their last, be it forwards, backwards, upwards, or down-The matter had evidently been rehearsed in the secret meetings of the past few days, and now, "was there a man dismayed" though the whole lot of them might be blundering? Certainly not; so, with their dynamite "pilot," they were prepared for a start, for up on the engine and in the break van were, at a given signal, the officials, and with beautiful incongruity, porters and shunters, mixed with young English gentlemen, still bearing some traces of their northern birthright, and that buoyancy that so signally shows itself where you find honest British youth abroad in the hope of making his fortune.

What of Portugal during this? Well, a cordon of soldiers had been drawn round the front of the engine and the "dynamite car," as I understand the head and front of the arrangement was termed amongst those who promoted it; round also on each side, were the picked men of the army of Portugal in South-East Africa, hump-backed, loose-limbed fellows, callous with the effect of a fell disease—a degree worse than leprosy—which they have established, and which they know is incurably dooming them physically.

Commandant and sergentos are busy with the pulling on of intricate white-thread gloves, for has not the last bugle sounded the ultimatum of the Governor's manifesto? and already two soldiers may be descried down by the water-tanks some two kilos away—tell it not in Gath—endeavouring to cut the iron rails with small timber-felling axes. Play away, my boys; it is sultry work, even under your wintry sun; and though a crowbar might lift the rail out of yielding sand, I fancy it will take more than your own mettle and the metal of your axes to break the journey between this and the extent of the line. Two Portu-

guese military engineers mount the engine as Rigby, the driver, discourses on the steam whistle most unearthly music, which is answered from the



"CUTTING THE LINES."

harbour by the varied notes of some British built and American boats lying there. Clang, clang, go the axes on the obdurate rails at the water tanks. and all is expectancy, very soon to be satisfied by the sudden opening of the steam vents on either side of the engine, sending forth a couple of volumes of vapour with a tremendous hissing noise, throwing the cordon of soldiers in rapid confusion in every direction; then the two heroes who had mounted the driving-box having dropped off like later summer flies, the train began slowly to move away on its journey. This proceeding proved too much for the commandant, and, stepping quickly forward, revolver in hand, which evidently, though directed

at the driver, must have become entangled with his thread glove, for, before it did its deadly work, one of the officials—a plucky little Dutchman whose name I do not know—had knocked up the arm of Signor the Commandant, and the pistol, flying up in the air, after having taken several turns, alighted on the pavement close to the group of important officers from which its owner had rushed, as a result of the concussion, went off with a bang, causing further confusion and consternation. The little Dutchman is immediately secured by a number of soldiers and conducted to the "Tronk," as are also a few partisans, who murmur or laugh their approval. The train glides on, with increasing speed, as those in it cheer lustily, and the whistles blow both in the harbour and on the engine; and, as the bugles play again, the two soldiers near the tanks, no longer bent upon endeavouring to "tear up the lines" by cutting them through, are seen scampering helter-skelter into the swamp land, where possibly something more congenial to their instruments might be found for the

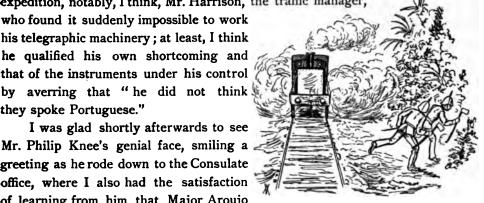
hacking at. They had certainly "cut" the line, but not in the sense they intended. There was considerable confusion and complication, now that it was plainly realised that the train was actually fading out of sight. The station-master

Mr. George Warre; so were some of the young blood of the expedition, notably, I think, Mr. Harrison, the traffic manager, who found it suddenly impossible to work his telegraphic machinery; at least, I think he qualified his own shortcoming and that of the instruments under his control

was arrested, so was the secretary and interpreter of the line,

they spoke Portuguese."

I was glad shortly afterwards to see Mr. Philip Knee's genial face, smiling a greeting as he rode down to the Consulate office, where I also had the satisfaction of learning from him that Major Aroujo



had been as good as his promise, and that incarceration under his own roof had not been a very harrassing or tedious ordeal. I further learnt that two men-of-war were well on their way from Cape Town.

The rest of the Delagoa Bay Railway war is easily told. The remainder of the

day was an arduous one both to the Consul and the Doctor at the Consulate house. There were all sorts of grievances, mental and physical, real and imaginary, and the place was thronged with those who said they durst not trust themselves at home for the night. Kindly shelter was

found for them, only to be returned. I am sorry to say, by the Doctor's discovery the next afternoon on coming down, that his coffers had been ransacked. Alas for human frailty, that there must be found black sheep in even the folds of impromptu sleeping rugs of such a sanctuary as Dr. Edgelow offered to

the varied group that occupied his bungalow that night; but let us hope the work was that of only one black sheep.

As for us, we placidly enjoyed ourselves with our unruffled host up on the hill. Perhaps conversation was a little strained in its facetiousness, as we speculated upon what sort of occupants the house might contain before another week, and what the future of the whole place might be. It was a happy thought to have Bob brought in with the Kaffir piano, and to its tones recite and sing one of those weird love-songs of his country that must be full of the poetry and feeling of unshackled nature itself.

CHAPTER IV.

"TRONKS," TRUNKS, AND TRAVELLING.

HE railway war now virtually being over and the Englishmen who took the train through the serried ranks of Portugal in such highly original style, having sent back a characteristic telegram explaining at how many kilos up the line they had left the engine standing, considerately adding that if the Portuguese wanted it they had "better blooming well fetch it," the intolerance of that people began to assert itself fourfold.

No! sooner had the final train under English control made its enforced departure, than the highly dignified process of arresting officials of the English Company, on the most paltry pretexts, commenced under the direction of the group of gallant officers who were so discomposed at the explosion of their commandant's

revolver. First, with much parade, of course the person who caused the firing of that piece was marched, heavily guarded, to the "Tronk," there to await in durance vile—perhaps more vile than any place of detention of modern times is the Tronk—until such time as it might be decided what to do with him. He was quickly followed by the stationmaster, and Mr. George Warre, the secretary and interpreter of the company. They were followed by miners, two who stood near me at the time, for the heinous offence of laughing. Through the town the diseased and crooked half-caste soldiers, armed cap-à-pic, attempted as much swagger as their miserable condition would permit. Never was such contemptible show of conquering display made over an invading foe than the attitude of this people towards the strangers within their gates. This, even as

the train that was supposed to have been " seized by military force " was panting on its journey! " For 'twas a famous victory."

The amount of bugle blown and general martial liveliness displayed on all hands was only as contemptible as it was ridiculous, and had it not been for its irritating inconvenience, would have been highly amusing.

Some days after the local rag came out in splendid diatribe upon the subject, and held out a journalistic wreath of laurels to the general honour of those concerned in the great event. I find on the

leaf of an old sketch-book the translation of a portion of one of these precious editorial harangues. It is almost obliterated, for, sooth to say, on one memorable occasion, when we were nearly lost in an unseaworthy boat, most of my notes became water-logged. Hear **h**im :---

"Now, if we be allowed in the full use of our right as independent journalists. we open a space to praise the superior authorities of this district for the great step they have taken in publishing this decree. It is an act that we honour, and we only



IN TRONK.

desire that the first document be followed without delay by many others affirming once, and for all time by law conceded, and that this be a very stringent document for our quick and deserved administrative independence," and so on.

With such rhodo nontade did the press feed the minds of its puerile readers until they well nigh fancied themselves monarchs of all they surveyed.

To my thinking, the attitude permitted at that period at Delagoa Bay may be ascribed all to the insolent, overbearing treatment met with by Englishmen not only there, but at other places of Portuguese settlement in East Africa for months after, and at the moment I am writing, for aught we know.

I have not the slightest conception what the meaning of the word "Tronk" may be, but having obtained a permit to visit some of those cast into it, I was enabled to form an idea of what it is like.

A more pestiferous hole I never have been in, and certainly never wish to enter again. It took me some time to recover the shock of seeing English gentlemen sitting and standing in this general prison amongst half-drunken Kaffirs, and half-caste Portuguese, subjected to the noisome stenches of the place and the brutal taunts of the custodians; unable to touch the fœtid water supplied for drink, and with the knowledge that the awful-looking stuff—a sort of sauerkraut—was almost synonymous with poison. The lot of those cast into this place is one of terrible torture and hardship. Such an outrage as that I witnessed affected me for many a day. My friend Mr. George Warre, whom I visited here, an accomplished gentleman, speaking Portuguese as fluently as his mother tongue, told me that on making application to communicate with his Consul he was refused, and the Chief of the Police volunteered to him the information that he might count himself lucky that he was not in chains. Even the wretched sergento who carried him these messages, was moved to describing his position as "vergonha," meaning that it was a shame and a disgrace.

The terrible stories we have heard of places of confinement in more temperate climates are bad enough; but in a country almost unendurably hot to a stranger, where every breath of wind carries fevers with it, and everywhere the most careful dietary precautions and observances are not too great, and the almost effeminate observances in the matter of "toilet requisites" are far from ignored by strong men, who are looked upon as "salted" to their surroundings, it is to me, who have investigated it, a matter of horror to think that an Englishman, walking the streets of Lourenço Marques, can, on the slightest pretext, at the raising of the whistle of some Portuguese "soldier," the off-cast of some gaol, be thrust into the place that I have but feebly described. And yet I understand the chief terror of finding yourself in Tronk is the mental anguish

at the anticipation of being sent to Mozambique, for the tales of those who have experienced the transfer and survived to tell them are the blackest of a black list.

And now, reader, patient reader, perhaps you think I am long dallying on my journey? Well, perhaps it is time to go, so let us pack and be off.

What is the best to take with us, for we purpose making for the land of Ophir, for the "supposed territory of the Queen of Sheba" marked on the map of commerce? Take just as little as you can, but don't go without anything you want, is the sage advice of experience, which really means travel as lightly as you can. "Trunks?" No; trunks are the greatest nuisance. and obsolete. Good tough leather pitchabout bags and small portmanteaus, those are your only wear, such as a "boy" can carry on his head, when you are on the march, and that you can stow away anywhere out of the way while you are sailing or camping. Having sorted; out, leave your surplus with your English agent and make ready for

a move. You are not in dear, happy England, or even on the continent of Europe, at any point where the most vexatious forms of extortion are mere modern inconveniences compared with the vexatious obstructions that will be offered to you here up to the very getting on board your steamer. Beware of the awful ordeal of procuring your passports. These scurvy knaves in office at the seat of Customs, what though they hate you, will do everything in their power to delay you beyond the sailing of your ship, for your English money is good, and it is to their advantage that you spend a little more of it amongst them while you tarry a further space, though it may be enforcedly. So beware of the pseudo-military gentlemen with long pointed finger nails, emblems of the fact that they do no work, procure your passports early, and get aboard as soon as you can, for it is healthier out there in the bay, and you will be with more congenial company.

At last the morning came for my departure from Delagoa Bay, orders having bidden me, with my comrade, Lieutenant Sudgen, to sail for Chiloane and there join others of our party, we got everything on board the Castle ss. Courland.

My good friend, Dr. Edgelow, bade me to a farewell breakfast at the Consulate house—one of the last to be partaken there under English auspices.

At this reunion I had the good fortune and pleasure of meeting Captain Le Seure, with whom I was to sail in the good ship Courland.

Farewells having been concluded, and all baggage being on board, I soon followed, and we started about midday to make our voyage up the Mozambique coast.

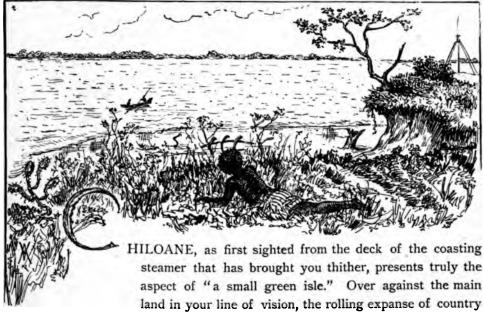
Nothing of any notable interest occurred during our journey, and as the same ground—or, rather, water—must be traversed on returning, with incidents better worth recording, I will merely mention the presence of a Portuguese Bishop peregrinating on a pastoral visitation. He was a fine specimen of a type who, knowing that in his exalted attitude of Christianity he was perfectly safe in the hereafter, had made up his mind to thoroughly enjoy the good things of this world while he had the opportunity. His wine was specially brought on board for him, and he had the only smokable cigars on the ship.



He left us 'at Inhambane, where he was received with much pomp and circumstance.

CHAPTER V.

FRESH WOODS AND PASTURES NEW.



line that makes your horizon, the island is dwarfed, and at a distance one would not more than credit its length to be some seven miles from end to end.

A gorgeous group of foliage planted in the steel blue sea is the general impression it conveys to the eye, and is an impression not dispelled on nearer observation. When rounding its northern extremity, the steamer cast anchor opposite the signalling point known as Singune. The usual rough-and-tumble business of getting into a rowing boat, and then on to the shoulders of a nigger, soon finds you planted on the sad seashore, with its record of wreckage strewn about, and here and there its gaunt stumps of swamped and decayed vegetation. The surf tumbles in with a lazy, languid crawl and a dull groan—for the weather

is calm—sliding up innumerable jelly fish, and then returning to drag them back again.

Your jelly fish is an indefinite kind of creature that I have never felt a very strong affection for, even in less suspicious waters than those of the Mozambique Channel, and my nearest acquaintance with any of his tribe has, from my youth up, been transacted with the aid of sticks and stones. I have even heard, and have accepted the fact, without personal investigation, that he is possessed of a peculiarly acute power of stinging. If this be so amongst the smaller fry of colder waters, what must be the stinging gauge of the specimen infesting these tropical tides, where the lethargic mass assumes large proportions, Surely one can estimate it in the speculative term, prodigious!

It makes one marvel at the pachydermatous consistency of the Ethiopian skin, as, when carrying you ashore, he positively wallows through a shoal of these glutinous seafarers.

I have seen a heavy knobkerry stick broken on a negro's pate, and I have seen him walk over broken glass and sharp flints as though they were the pile of a carpet. I have heard of him lying with his feet in the fire, calling out that he could smell meat burning somewhere around; but not until I looked down from the altitude of his neck, at the swarm of these jelly-fish suckers clinging to his legs, was I aware that the skin of his body was impervious to such an extent, and could only close my eyes and fervently wish that he might not drop me amongst the uninviting throng.

And now that my foot is on the dismal shore which gives the title to these rambling notes, and on which I have presently to find myself an unwilling sojourner for weary weeks and monotonous months, I must pause, as it were upon the threshold, to make some explanation, which I have deferred until I find it absolutely necessary, in consequence of the frequent mention of my co-mates in exile.

To be brief, then, we were a hopeful group who set out on an expedition in the interests of a company which no good purpose will be gained by particularizing, further than mentioning that amongst ourselves we alluded to it after much sad experience as "the Shabby Awful Company." We were under the command of a worthy soul, who, as he will only take occasional and vapoury form in these pages, I need no more definitely indicate than by referring to him by the sobriquet by which we knew him, that of "Captain Limejuice." His Kaffir

nick-name, "Macca-kan," is unwieldy, and its translation uncomplimentary, so we will pass it by.

It was pleasant to be aroused from my initial contemplation of the barren, bitter shore by the unmistakable voice of our guide and interpreter, Bill Heavi-



THROWING THE ASSEGAL.

sides, whose deep sonorous tones have given to him amongst the natives, with whom he has lived for some eighteen years, the title of "Gom-cule," which, being

interpreted, meaneth "thunder voice," and, as a variety of term, "Rhadi-cule," that is to say, "Father of Voices."

He was accompanied by his boy, "Office," a splendid specimen of the Zulu, in comparison with whom the local Kaffirs put in a rather poor physical appearance.

Heavisides bade myself and Lieutenant Sugden a hearty welcome, and Office showed his satisfaction by hurling his lance in the sun, a feat which he performed with much dexterity, to the awe and admiration of the native fishers and boatmen, who stood in knots upon the shingle.

Standing upright in the glory of his splendid physical development, he pointed to a clump of black and brackish shrub, then stretching his arms at full length, he gave the right, which held his weapon, three or four graceful sweeps and hurled the assegai into the air. Up, up, it went as though shot from a bow, then, poising for a moment, it wheeled and descended, point downwards, right in the centre of the shrub, where it stuck and shook with its retarded velocity. The performance was received with much jabbering and gesticulation of approval by the spectators as the Zulu warrior (for Office was one of Cetewayo's body guard or personal fighting men) released his fighting stick with much dignity and awaited the movements of his master.

Gom-cule elected to lead us to the house of Senhor Pinto, which is situated close by the signalling station of Singune, where we were hospitably received by that gentleman. Senhor Pinto is distinctly the finest specimen of the Portuguese race that I have met. Banished from Lisbon as a political exile for thirty years, he has built a bungalow at this point of the convict settlement of Chiloane, decidedly the most healthy spot of the island.

What Senhor Pinto's original sin may have been I know not, but in a colony of cut-throats, where even the Government officials are doing their "bit of time," he seemed to me to be a shining light of injured innocence. A contrast to the usual type of Portuguese settler, he is a fine, tall fellow, standing erect, with a restless, glistening eye that would suggest the ideal plotter against the yoke of an emasculate system of monarchy. With a vigour unusual in his compatriots, who are languishing here and there upon the various settlements, he tried to improve the locality of his banishment from the first; but no sooner, it would appear, had he completed his harmless personal plans, than it seemed good on several occasions to root him out, send him elsewhere, and seize the results of his energy and labour. At last some sort of indemnity from this kind of torture has intervened at

the Point Singune, where having built an excellent house with a good garden, and given some attention to sanitary decency, he has received a tacit assurance that he will be allowed to remain undisturbed. A very wise resolution on the part of the powers he has offended, I should say, for he is very popular with those who go up and down in ships and find it necessary to touch at this point.

That he is good hearted I can vouch from personal experience, and I have it from my friend, Mr. George Crampton, who was sick nigh unto death in his house, that he nursed him with a rare personal gentleness which would never suggest itself from the restless vulpine character of his ordinary demeanour.

I am curious to know when this restless soul indulged in sleep. What short periods I have at times spent in his establishment I have never known him to retire to the sanctuary of a bedroom, for at night a group of "Capitaes Mores," and other mysterious Portuguese persons would gather in the largest sitting-room of the house, and burn the midnight oil over the gaming table until interrupted by sunrise, when they would disperse and betake them to the first of the series of their daily siestas. Not so Pinto (I wish I knew his Christian appellation, for "Pinto" is about equivalent to our Jones or Smith). I would hear him in his garden or swinging in his hammock, singing and smoking, and after this the business of the day. Scotched, but untamed, would seem the only explanation of the curious life of this strange and interesting man.

From the point at Singune, the walk, or ride in a machealo, across the swamp land, to the other end of the island, is something more than six miles, and an exceedingly pleasant journey, if not taken in the heat of the day, and it is equally unpleasant and dangerous if undertaken when the sun is down and the malarial vapours are wandering about seeking whom they may devour.

For some wise purpose of their own, the Portuguese have erected their Government house and Custom-house at the extreme point from that at which the steamers touch and transact their business. Indeed, the only vessels of any pretensions beyond those of a one-mast lighter or whale-boat that can harbour at this other end—that is, Chiloane proper—are ominous-looking Arab dhows, which are of that rascally weasel build and nature, that they seem to be able to slip in and out of any sort of harbour or lagoon with surprising dexterity and swiftness. The swamp land of this island is a most deceptive track. The island is some two miles in width, and forming its centre is this peculiar piece

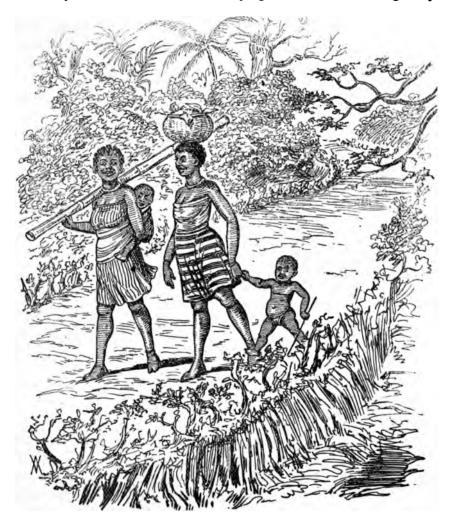
of country. To arrive at it from either end you are seemingly mounting to higher ground from the sand of the settlements by the coast, and it is quite bewildering when in the swamp lands to find that you are on a level with the sea, and that the tide has quite covered large portions of it. The gradation to a cup-like centre is so very gentle, and made amongst thick heavy foliage, that it is not easily observable until custom acquaints you with it. There is a road right through



the swamp from Chiloane to Singune, and it is a remarkable piece of land engineering, having been raised and built by native women.

This road, under the circumstances of workmanship, is a marvel of construction and patient labour; it runs through the centre of the island, being about five miles in length; it is artificially raised some four feet, closely shored up with thick, tough tree boughs, and is high and dry from any approaches of the inundating tide. The roadway is a wearisome sand-track—but this seems to be rather a matter of choice with the Kaffirs for pedestrianism than other ground work—and

along the whole length each side is hedged with a low blossoming shrub fence. For this piece of work the Portuguese paid the contractor a sum equivalent to two hundred pounds! The labour of carrying material and banking it up and



facing with props, planting the fencing, and making it as good as it is, must have been very great. The price paid would be simply ridiculous were the numbers of wretched women employed in carrying it out not performing it under the bond

of slavery. Labour is cheap enough in this part of Africa in all conscience, when honestly paid for, but this enterprise is beyond the wildest dream of economy.

The road winds through a most pleasant vista of luxurious foliage for the most part—though portions of it are wholly unprotected by shade of any kind, which makes it very grateful to plunge amongst the foliage again, and rest on one

of the bright green patches of The machealo boys, grass. when carrying their passengers, seldom, if at all, use this road; they seem to prefer Kaffir paths through the swamp, where they can cut off curves and give full swing to their peculiar gait and As they are generally emulated by message boys and other youthful inhabitants, the road is mostly at the disposal of warriors, women, and white people. Dotted along on either side of this footway are many small Kaffir settlements, round which the industry of agriculture amongst these swamp dwellers is observable. Squared out may be seen patches of cultivated ground, surrounded by stout dwarf walls to protect the produce from the salt and brackish water which at high tide sur-



rounds them though only to a trifling depth. The chief objects of cultivation are the Indian corn and mealies, on which the natives subsist.

Elevated mounds of some extent are the places generally chosen by the natives for their dwelling-places, and here in the cool shade of the thickly-grown trees may be seen the little kraals, the huts of which are remarkable for the neatness with which they are constructed, and their absolute cleanliness,

both within and without. Groups of women are at the doors of them occupied in the eternal mealie pounding and sifting, or some other domestic avocation, while young girls are drawing water or washing clothes at the little sand spring. boy children are, as usual, practising war games with their little mock fighting sticks, and on the grass are feeding a few goats and kids; while a most important rooster is picking out a repast for his half dozen hens, and keeping a sharp lookout for the fierce as saults of a rather dissipated-looking Muscovy duck. Altogether these-villagets, shall we term them, or kraalings? for they scarcely aspire to full title-present a most comfortable, cleanly aspect. Their inhabitants are seemingly happy, contented, and polite to a stranger, in a way that is a refreshing contrast to the bearing of the Portuguese lords of the soil or their black convict-soldiery —that brutal institution of authority, at once the disgrace of the nation who have established it, and the terror of the natives over whom it holds control. Portuguese black soldier is, perhaps, not excepting the black rhinoceros, the most hateful denizen of East Africa. He is a cross between a negro convict and a gaol bird—a convict himself. The parent Government, in order not to be at the expense of supporting him as a useless log, makes a soldier of him, and, decked in a ragged and ill-fitting uniform, and entrusted with musket and side arm, he resolves himself into a military authority with more conceit and self-satisfaction than a jackdaw, and more virulent brutality and less idea of law and discipline than This is the precious guardian of Portuguese rights and territory! He will stick at nothing to satisfy his animal passions and lust, which are of the lowest and most brutal kind. The hut of a native has no sanctuary for wife or child, if it so likes him to enter it, say, on the pretext of tax-collecting, and should he find it necessary to use violent and summary punishment upon a protesting father or husband, there is no appeal against the savage who often inflicts fatal injuries with the weapons at his disposal. For he was, after all, only enforcing the payment of taxes due to the gracious sovereign whom he humbly represents, and whose interests he is in duty bound to serve!

This brute, should he covet a ring, a pipe, a pair of boots, or anything you may have, would not hesitate in sticking you in the back and doing you to death for its possession. It is an easy matter, even in a small island like Chiloane, secluded from the observation of the civilized world, to prove that you were found dead; and, after all, the death of an Englishman is a consummation to be devoutly wished for by the Portuguese in these convict-slave settlements.

Beyond the Chiloane road you have to strike through a stretch of sterile, hopeless-looking flat, in every way unlike the fair green pasture-like portions through which you have been passing. It commences abruptly, and is entirely void of vegetation save of the coarsest and sparsest description, but is dotted over with blackened snags and trunks of trees that look as if they had been subjected to the action of fire some long time since, or were suffering from some earth disease, in which even the poisonous plants, so abundant in these parts, found it impossible to gain an existence. The ground is of a pallid, sickly yellow hue, much scored and fissured by cracks, that add to its general desolation and uninviting aspect. It is dry and hard, and has been much subjected to the action of water, evidently at no recent date, and being on somewhat more of an elevation than any other at this position of the island, would almost suggest that it has been subjected to volcanic agitation as well, to judge from the quantities of pumicestone to be found along the sea shore. This arid space terminates as abruptly as it commences, and again it is pleasant to dive out of the pitiless beating of the sun into the shade of trees and on to the cool footway of grass which, sloping down, brings us to the settlement of Chiloane proper.

Here we found our hut, and in it the other members of the expedition, indulging in the soothing observance of afternoon tea.

A cursory glance at the "settlement" and the seashore occupy me until sunset, with its ever gorgeous colourings; and, as sunset means darkness, and darkness means sudden and treacherous cold night air, I repair to the hut again, where supper, or "scorf," as the niggers term everything edible, being disposed of, we fall to talking of future plans and prospects over the evening pipes. Candles and cork beds being supplied, we lie down to rest on the concrete floor of the slave hut, to be sung to sleep by the not very comforting chamber organs of festive mosquitoes, which, like many diminutive human beings I have had experience of, are gifted with a loud voice and an arrogant, not to say offensive, manner. Fatigue will do much for you even on the floor of a slave hut, and, notwithstanding the attentions of these vicious insects at my head, and the no less vigorous investigations of ants at my toes, I slept my first sleep in this place soundly until "the boys" brought in tea and admitted sunlight by opening the rickety shutters of the room. Even then I was loth to leave my couch, but though the merry mosquitoes had vanished, the ants were still intolerably attentive with my toes, and with the loud jabbering of niggers outside, further rest was but a farce, so I rose and made what little toilet was necessary.

It may be noted, therefore, that laziness is not a weakness that may be indulged in with impunity in these latitudes. No need to admonish the sluggard to go to the ant here, for most assuredly the ant will come to him, and bring with him his sisters, cousins, and aunts of all sizes, sexes, and denominations.

Presently you will get used to him and his species, for you will find them in your air-tight tea chest, in your patent screw-topped water bottle; in fact, so universal do they become that it is with something of a joyful surprise that you find them absent on chipping an egg. They, however, overshadow the salt-box, and get equal with you before you have finished your ovary operations.

As the day wore on, a lighter came round from Singune, bringing with it Lieutenant Sugden and the further stores and supplies that we had brought from Delagoa Bay. More Custom-house extortion followed, if on a smaller, certainly on an intensified scale.

After some days' sojourn at Chiloane, Captain Limejuice, who had become moody and mysterious, gave the order for us to proceed with the stores to the island of Aranguae, further up the coast. Friend Crampton was badly down with the fever, and the captain elected to stay with him. So, therefore, the rest of us took what was enumerated on board a most cranky whale-boat, and, under the guidance of Heavisides, started on a journey which proved somewhat perilous, and of which I will discourse in the next chapter.

I little thought on leaving the uninviting shores of Chiloane that I should return to spend there a period of unwilling idleness, anxiety, and consequent illness.

CHAPTER VI.

SWAMPED AT SOFALA.

further voyage up the channel of the Mozambique dawned fresh and fine, and the water, seen from the shore, looked calm and clear as a mirror.

We breakfasted in high spirits, being joined by other "prospectors"—Messrs. Williams and Colquhoun — who had camped opposite our hut under the shade of three large trees of thick dark green foliage. I learnt afterwards that their tents were the admirable ones supplied to cur expedition by Messrs. Piggott of Milk

Street, but our Captain, for some reason, had thought fit to dispose of them "by private treaty." Had anyone at that early period of our exploits but calculated upon the chances of upcountry exploring, it might have been suggested

to his mind that no such devoutly-to-be-wished-for future was at all uppermost in the commander's thoughts.

Williams and Colquhoun were hearty good fellows, and Englishmen to the backbone; and I hope the tents and their own enthusiastic spirits have done them good service in their undertakings.

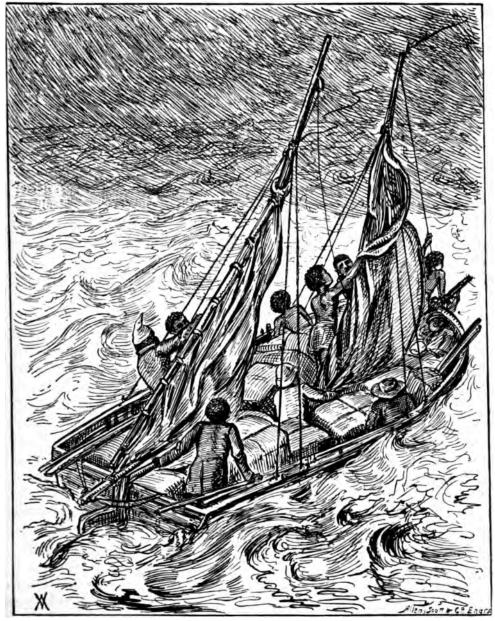
Two other "prospectors" of a very different stamp and calibre came upon the scene, one a Swiss and the other a German, and on account

of the utter melancholy of them both and their lamentable state of home-sickness—not improved by a touch of fever—they went by the title of the "merry Swiss boys." As their proposed destination was also Aruanguae, our captain, with commendable courtesy towards them, but a strange disregard for our comfort and safety, offered them passage with their goods and chattels, in our already overloaded boat—a light and easy act of hospitality, considering he was not sailing with us.

There was, of course, nothing for it but to acquiesce, and the padrone and his mate having announced all ready for starting, we bade farewell to Crampton, who was very ill, and our "leader" (whom we were leaving behind!), while Bill Heavisides, Lieutenant Sugden, Dr. Roberts, and myself, stowed ourselves with the crew and the merry Swiss boys as best we could, and set sail with water almost level with the gunwale of the boat. However, as all was calm and bright, we put the best face upon it we could, and the crew, with the aid of Office and another of Heavisides' "boys" "Matches," rowed and poled us into the current and a favourable breeze.

There is a happy-go-lucky and never-make-care style about your negro navigator that is as audacious as it is reckless, and when a capfull of wind was found, the padrone hoisted every stitch of his lumbering canvas, which very soon, in the gentle breeze, showed us how unsteady and unseaworthy we were. Slow and tedious was the voyage for the first few hours, as our positions on the top of the bales were cramped and uncomfortable, and the incessant jabber and clicking of the captain and his crew—at first amusing—became a nuisance and intolerable to the ear. I may take an exaggerated view of our discomforts, for the fever was upon me to some extent, and, for a recipe to make a man peevish and irritable, commend me to that malarial malady. To him, verily, the grasshopper becomes a burden, and certainly several bushels of grasshoppers are a dulcet lullaby when compared with a buck nigger in the full blast of his conversational powers. Circumstances soon altered the case of having time to grumble at the turgid passage we were making, or to give time for bilious contemplation of our situation.

I should have stated that the first portion of our journey along the mangrove swamps of Chiloane to Singune had occupied the portion of the day at our disposal. At sundown we anchored off Singune Point for the night, the niggers considerately electing to wade ashore and sleep in the bush, for though poverty may make us acquainted with strange bedfellows, I sincerely trust that under the



A CRANKY C RAFT.

most adverse circumstances, I may not be again, as I once was—only once—forced to sleep with niggers in the limited confines of this very whale-boat.

It is, therefore, our second day—the calm conditions of yesterday being still in possession of nature—that having made for the open sea, I found matters so stale, flat and unprofitable until, as I have indicated, circumstances altered the case. We were well out in the open, though within sight of the mainland, which ran like a huge green snake on our port side.

The afternoon was waning when, with that peculiar unannounced suddenness so treacherous in tropical waters, a squall came down upon us like a hawk swooping on a tomtit, and very considerably altered the aspect of everything. The boat had been crawling along like a fly submerged in a sardine box, her old sails not even flapping, but hanging useless by the masts, when suddenly the wind came down with such a well directed blow:—

That, like a pawing horse let go, She made a sudden bound.

and very nearly unshipped her crew and passengers.

This sudden attack roused all on board to a sense of the situation. Even the merry Swiss boys, who were much stricken with fever, seemed aware of impending peril, and one of them kept up a constant wail of "Meine mutter; ach! Meine Mütter!" The old hull creaked, and every stick of her shook as though anxious to part company under such suddenly rough treatment. The sails, however, bellied with the wind, and we were driving right before the gale—fortunately with considerable speed, for had it not been so we should have been of a surety swamped out here, a considerable distance from the shore. As it was, so deep was the boat in the water, that every now and then the waves on the lee side seemed to stand up in a parapet along the gunwale. There was a hurried confabulation between the padrone and Bill Heavisides, who shouted to us at its conclusion, "Prepare for the worst, boys; he doesn't think we'll weather it; but we will get rid of this lumber before we sink our own"-indicating the pots and pans and bales of our woe-begone Swiss friends. I felt somewhat light-headed and frivolous from the touch of fever—which had not improved in the baking heat of the sun in this open boat for two days—and an incontrollable desire to drink the ship's water, which was little better than the bilge of the cask. I had, however, sufficient circumspection to divest myself of my boots, and, with that marvellous

attraction that water has for those possessed of malaria, I positively revelled in the thought of a compulsory plunge, utterly heedless of the possible attentions of a shark or two which, to judge from the presence of the pilot-fish about our stern during the calmer hours of the voyage, were doubtless on our track. It was now a matter of holding on like grim death, and watching with no little curiosity the wash from the windward, which was, as I have said, fortunately well behind us, though it threatened every now and then to overtake and engulf the rickety craft. The Kaffir sailors are, however, wonderfully adroit, and their utter disregard of personal safety stood us in good turn; for by their exertions, in which I can scarcely now conceive how they kept their balance and avoided going overboard, they would lay out from the side of the boat with poles and oars, working in the most vigorous manner to steady her, and edge our course piecemeal to the shore.

After some hours of this uncertain navigation, in which we were more than once on the point of lightening the boat of its cargo, at the dictates of intruding cross-waves, we sided with the mainland, where the surf was seething and hissing as though angry with the lashing it had to endure. We slipped more through Providential guidance than any navigation we could command, crabways into a creek, where, once out of the boil of the sea, the padrone put her head to it, and, with slanting sheet, ran us aground in a haven of refuge somewhat south of Sofala—how far I know not, but far enough to find ourselves in a thickly wooded solitary country. I, with others able to do so, jumped thigh-deep into the water and made for the shore, glad to leave the creaky craft that had weathered the storm so well to the care of her master and crew. The poor Swiss boys were carried ashore by "Matches" and "Office," one of them being now quite non compos mentis with the fever, and "babbling like a child in its sleep."

The squall ceased as abruptly as it had commenced, and on the lone, lovely land there reigned a silent calm, that after the turmoil of the afternoon wrapped one in a feeling of oppressive awe.

A place for camp having been selected, and necessaries being got ashore, I made heart-moving appeals for water, which the doctor peremptorily refused to let me have, compromising his refusal by an unsatisfying dose of quinine, and a promise of tea when it would be ready. Fighting hard against the restless feeling engendered by the touch of fever that possessed me, I determined to occupy myself with making some notes; so, marking well the position of the camp,



PLEASANT BUT PERILOUS.

and with sketch-book in hand, I wandered along the belt of mighty trees that overshadowed the seashore, to contemplate the ocean which had lately so cruelly threatened us, but which now lay calm in the glorious mantle of coloured light, cast over it by the sun, slanting to his rest behind the forest land.

After wandering thus, lost in the wonderful beauty that surrounded me, I sat down at the trunk of a tall tree, with long, spreading branches, clothed in dark green velvety leaves, to look and wonder.

A feeling of restfulness and relief crept over me, and I was very happy as my head rested against the huge gnarled plinth beside me. The wood seemed soft as eider down, a cool breeze fanned my face, and my hands felt pleasantly listless; the slipping of my sketch-book from my fingers on to the grass at my feet struck me as irresistibly comic, and I can now, as I write, distinctly hear the echoes of the solemn wood sending back my vacuous laugh, raised by an event so humo-Now I was in the boat again, but it was strangely altered, and we were gliding pleasantly towards Teddington Lock. The ladies, bless them! where did they come aboard in their bright summer-hats and dainty muslins? And why did they keep altering their charming faces, and the fair bloom of their English complexion, to the deep mahogany of the Ethiopian? It was most unbecoming, with golden hair, too; but they are very pleasant, and perhaps are only trying to If so, it is clearly my duty to amuse them in turn, so here goes, for I see that old curmudgeon, the Twickenham ferryman, casting a line from a punt. A stave from Stephen Adams's song is sure to draw the old badgers. Now for it :--

> "He's not rowing fast and he's not rowing steady, And it's many a mile to Twickenham town, Yo ho-o-o, ho-o-o! Yo-o-o!"

Well, that is curious, my tongue is too lazy to articulate, and we shall be out of earshot of the old fellow before I have played him off; perhaps I am thirsty there is the claret cup with its lump of clinking ice and refreshing sprig of borrage. No, it is no good, my hands are too sweetly idle to stretch for it, and that girl with the bewitching cloudy hat and the flat ebony nose, who has been taking snuff with such *outre* sniffs, is eyeing it so eagerly that I am sure she would confiscate the whole tankard before I could reach it. This is all very strange; I do not remember landing, and in Berkshire, too! I know it is Berkshire, for I know every clump and bush of Ascot Heath, even as we walk across it, as we do

now in the dark; besides, do you not hear the staghounds and pups baying and yelping in the Royal kennels? Geography seems woefully mixed, but I know where I am, and precious cold it feels in these boating flannels. It must have been raining, or the dew very heavy crossing the Heath, for my legs seem cramped and wet. Ugh! that bark never came from Goodall's pack; it must be a stray mongrel prowling about the water-pipes. If it should be a hound got loose, by his voice I should guess he is very hungry; here! give me my stick!

I start up; above me are the dark blue sky and the black foliage of the tall African tree, pierced by a single brilliant star that is looking straight down upon me. Every joint is racked with pain, and my teeth chatter in unison with my quivering limbs, so cold am I, but my protruding tongue is too large for my mouth, and I feel like to choke. All is as still as death, save now and then that uncanny yelping. I shake myself together, and with an effort, arouse myself My rifle and revolver are safe at the camp, so is my knife. I have got my pipe and my match-box, but it is as wet as a tadpole, and the contents useless.

With an effort I totter to my feet to endeavour to grasp the situation, and clear my brain, which feels decidedly "dotty."

Verily, geography has been woefully mixed, and I most assuredly don't know where I am. I am on the mainland, on the East Coast of Africa, at night. A moonless, midwinter night. Alone. The billows of the ocean spread darkly out before me, and the billows of the forest stretch behind and on either side of me, and I am the proud possessor of a box of wet matches and a handful of bright Jubilee sovereigns, every one of which I would give for a spoonful of water to release my tongue and throat. My Waterbury is set to Greenwich time, and whatever may be the happy condition of London at the hour it points to, no amount of calculation will alter the density of this July night where I stand. Self-preservation is the first consideration, and the uncanny yelping suggests the advisability of a weapon of some sort. There are plenty of pieces of dry broken branches about the tree trunks, so I arm myself with one simulating the weaver's beam of history. Now for investigation, for my eyes are becoming accustomed to the dark. The huge tree I have been so recklessly happy under since sunset is fortunately a conspicuous object standing apart from its fellows, and above it is the solitary brilliant star. So, noting this, I build up a landmark of broken timber,

determined to make short, cautious journeys in quest of the camp and my comrades, or the boat, and return to it should I fail in my quest. I notice that there are signs of Kaffir paths skirting the woodland undergrowths, so I set out desperate with thirst in the direction I fancy the camp must be pitched, though everything seems so altered in the dark that I am very hazy as to my bearings. Many detours in both directions, up and down the skirting of the wood, for I carefully avoid penetrating it, end in returns to my tree and loadstar.

My limbs were very rickety and useless, but movement was absolutely necessary both for my mental and physical condition, and I kept up this sort of peregrination for a considerable time and for many journeys, making longer and bolder expeditions each time, keeping well out of the wood, and always returning to my tree, my cairn, and my loadstar, which, though it had shifted position a good deal, still held me well to my locality.

At last, making a voyage of inspection somewhat more lengthy and inland than hitherto, for thirst and suspense were almost unendurable (though eating some tobacco had much soothed the condition of my head), a plainly marked Kaffir path suggested to me that possibly a spring or well might be found along it. After travelling some considerable distance I espied, about a man's height from the ground, a light burning right ahead of me. I paused and wondered, for it was in exactly the opposite direction to the one I felt certain the camp to be, and where the creek in which the boat lay was situated. Perhaps my disordered brain had mixed even the local geography, and this was a light on the mast of the boat, and the creek was in this direction, not in the opposite. I made up my mind to explore the cause of the light at all hazards, so fixing well the position of my star, I set out for this new beacon. It proved to be considerably farther off than I had at first conceived, but I was nearing it, and presently descried that it was the withered stump of a tree well alight in a projecting branch. Beyond it was a small camp-fire, and before I got quite familiar with the surroundings, I stumbled against something rolled up in a mat which gave a grunt, and then, sitting up, it revealed the black face of a nigger surmounted by an old-fashioned white nightcap with a tassel nodding at its tip. I felt like Captain Cook, Robinson Crusoe, and the Swiss Family Robinson all rolled into one, and not being quite sure of my new acquaintance's temperament or what view of an intruding white man he might take at this unreasonable hour, I thought it better to open some sort of conversation. So I commenced in a hoarse voice almost inarticulate, "Sing-a-boon! Bass," and then, pointing to my tongue, added, "Aqua, aqua, Bass." It sounds as if I had been requesting to be supplied with a diluted bottle of ale, but I knew that a Kaffir had a few words of Latin in his vocabulary—wherever he may have got them—and that he would understand



"aqua" to mean water, and that the appellation of " Bass" (master) would at least be soothing, and show the spirit of humility with which I approached him. He evidently grasped the situation, for rearing himself up on his legs, he roused another bundle of mats, and held a short guttural conversation with a woolly head that protruded from it, then, turning to me, scraped his foot in a friendly and reassuring manner, and then, pointing to his throat, and then in the direction I had come from, said, "Yah,

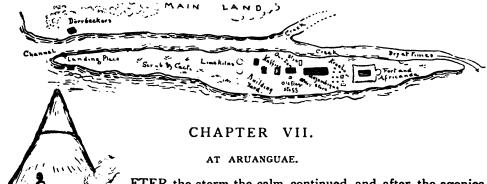
Bass, aqua, yah!" and seizing me by the wrist, dragged me pell-mell along the path I had just traversed; then, diving into the thicket, went on—on over sand-tracks, through brushwood and grass mounds, at such a rate that I was fairly out of breath before long, and lost my weaver's beam with the velocity of the motion. All the time I remember being most ludicrously reminded of Mr. Stuart Cumberland when he, blindfolded, drags his "subject" round a public hall in search of a pin on a

^{*} Term of courteous salutation.

"thought-reading" expedition. Presently we came upon an open space, with a large camp fire and a number of figures wrapped in rugs lying about; was this my place of execution, and was the promise of "aqua" merely a blind to lure me to the precincts of the full force of my destroyers? Perish the foolish, frightened thought! for, as my guide with the night-cap leaves me, and, stepping over some of the recumbent forms, puts his head down to one of them, I hear the plaintive moan of the merry Swiss boy, "Meine, Mütter; ach! meine Mütter!" Then the figure with whom my guide has been talking springs up, and the stentorian tones of Bill Heavisides convince me that the wanderer has returned to the right place at last. "Mac, I am glad to see you! Mandog, I thought you were lost. We have been searching, shouting, firing salutes, until dark, and now we have three camps out for you. How did you tumble over the farthest?" I gave it up, and pointed to my tongue. Tea, with a modicum of "square-face" (Scheidam gin) in it was a great alleviation to the thirst I had endured, and went rapidly to the relief of my limbs. Then, divested of my wet nether garments, I was rubbed down by the man in the night-cap—in whom I now recognised the mate of the whale-boat. My conscience! how a nigger can rub! I believe he would have got to the bones of my legs, and commenced polishing them, had I not checked him. After this, rolled up in blankets, before the camp fire, I soon forgot my indiscretion and its consequent inconveniences, not to say hazards, and fell asleep to the lullaby of the wretched Swiss "Meine Mütter; ach! meine Mütter!"

There is a certain moral in this chapter which perhaps none of my readers will ever be so indiscreet as to require to lay to heart, but I will record it.

Never wander along an unknown track of African country to make a sketch without you have arms, ammunition, water, dry matches, and a pocket compass—even if it only be ever such a little distance—and even then do not give way to drowsiness and sleep.



FTER the storm the calm continued, and after the agonies of the past night, rest had put me into tolerable condition again, so that with the order to sail for Aruanguae, I was ready and able to assist the others in overhauling the cargo—much of it, such as sugar and flour, being

damaged by the action of the sea-water. To our surprise, we found that underneath the baggage and provisions, the weight and bulk of which had caused us so much anxiety, there nestled a large assortment of ballast in the shape of stones, so that the boat was much lightened by discarding these, though much to the indignation of the captain of the craft, who evidently looked upon the lumber as about as necessary for navigation as his rudder or the sails. The rest of the voyage was made with tolerable comfort.

Like other coast stations of the Portuguese settlements, Aruanguae is somewhat difficult of access, and though described as an island, is only so when the tide is full: when it is out, the mainland is quite accessible across the mud-reaches at the extreme end from the one at which the channel or creek affords a landing. The settlement is but a small one, and it would be hard to surmise what its population may be, as the restless come there from various points, squat for a short period, and disappear again. It is seemingly, however, a busier little place than the larger and more southerly island of Chiloane. It boasts a fort and governor's house, both of the crudest manufacture. The Mozambique Company have a considerable

storehouse, and actually run a steamer up the river Pungwae, the proximity of which inlet to the mainland may have much to do with the liveliness of the place.

Having traversed the tortuous sandway from the landing-place to the hut placed at our disposal, a resting place of any kind, even rugs upon the concrete floor, was most welcome. The house or hut was very similar to the one we had left in Chiloane, well adapted for the storing of slaves in the roof room. For the accommodation of men like ourselves, however determined we might be to "rough it," it was far from adequate, being small, ill-lighted, and in close proximity to a filthy pigstye, inhabited by an unsavoury boar and two sows with their offspring. These may have at some remote period belonged to the breed of pigs popular in Berkshire, but generations of their family cast upon this uncongenial soil must have acted considerably in the deterioration of their kind. It would indeed be unreasonable to expect much good breeding from these pigs, seeing the desolate nature of the land which had given them birth, and from which they gained a somewhat sparse and hazardous sustenance amongst the scrub and cacti that make a hard struggle in their turn amongst the sand and mud reaches of this far from salubrious spot. No one seemed to feed or look after the pigs unless at such time as one was called from its fellows to grace the table of some of the Portuguese authorities. Under such circumstances, it is little wonder to find that the pigs were by instinct adroit thieves, and vied with a couple of stray monkeys in the practice of their art. This islet of Aruanguae has one redeeming feature, in that it is so accessible to the mainland, that at the point opposite the channel by which entrance is made to it from the sea, are pitched the hunting lodge and settlement of Philip Dörrbecker. A genial * Dutch gentleman is Mr. Dörrbecker, and lucky the English wanderer who finds him at home in what, under his influence, is indeed a happy hunting ground. As for our party, when he had opportunity, he showed us much consideration and hospitality. The place has the advantages of good soil and the shelter of fine trees, and its natural attributes have been utilized to the best advantage, so that in due season a good stock of vegetable produce is at hand, the value and benefit of which can only be appreciated by those who have experienced the want of such necessaries. Added to this, the proprietor is a skilled and keen sportsman, so that there is no lack of good buffalo and buck meat, with which he is most generous, not only to the stranger within his gates, but wherever he can find wayfarers to whom a present of fresh meat is a priceless boon.

Aruanguae has with most commendable intentions been put under tillage whereever vegetation seemed a possibility. It is, however, disheartening when a husbandman, who with much toil and trouble has prepared his ground and sown his seed, after much anxious watching finds coming up not a crop of vegetables, but myriads of tiny crabs that have tunneled through from the sea, making inlets for the brine to follow them. Thousands of these honey-combed cells soon inundate the garden ground. There is little use therefore in looking for much produce in this sandy place beyond the irritating clumps of scrub and cacti that confront you at every turn.

Night was not pleasant in our new quarters. As I have indicated already, we were somewhat cramped for space—even more so than I had at first perceived, for it turned out that a couple of rooms in the back part of the hut were shut off and occupied by some mysterious stranger, who did not show himself or court acquaintanceship. The two merry Swiss boys, who, in consideration of their extreme state of collapse, were allowed to be carried by the "boys" from the boat to the hut with their belongings, showed that shrewd perception often observable in sick people of selecting the best and roomiest apartment and taking secure possession of it. We were consequently forced to make what shift we could in the two remaining ones and listen during the tiresome hours of darkness to the groans and lamentations of the invalids. Our Kaffir house and kitchen were in close proximity, and the arrival of our fresh contingent was sufficient reason for the collecting of the native population at this place, to keep up a noisy jabbering and laughing all night long. It is a poor imitation of rest to lie on a hard cork bed placed upon the floor, and try to read with the sickly light of a candle; nor did the eye gain much relief when taken off the blurred page to rest on the blank dirty walls or the ominous slave hole above one's head in the ceiling, from which enormous spiders with great hairy legs and claws like crabs glared down upon the fresh occupants of their stronghold. Weary eyelids must close, and sleep seems almost possible, when you are aroused to the unpleasant fact that if you want any degree of even the poor comfort offered, you must get up and hunt out one of the purloining monkeys that has made entrance in some unseen manner. This done. and with a look round to see that window shutters and doors are secure, against further intrusion of the kind, you return to your cork bed and make every effort to readjust the rugs and blankets that never will fold right and try once more to compose the mental condition into something like passive resignation. But it is not to be, for there, up in the slave hole of the roof, are the now vindictive features of the monkey you have with such personal suffering driven out into the night glaring at you in your helpless position; nor will he satisfy himself with this, for failing his accustomed cocoa-nut, he grasps one of the huge, hideous spiders and hurls it down with unerring aim. The room is transformed into a very busy place in a moment; all are up shouting and dancing out of reach of the spider with as much noise and activity as the occupants of a ladies' school at the intrusion of a mouse in the dormitory.

This state of affairs soon brings a group of niggers to the assistance of their masters, and the monkey who has wrought all the disturbance has gracefully retired to some place of security and concealment, from which it is useless to try and dislodge him. Once again under blankets, chanticleer, on whose crest time doubtless hangs heavy in these latitudes, has taken it into his head to hail the morn, which has not yet broken, with the most unmusical selection of crowings. Thus, hot, thirsty, and afraid to drink the uncooked water, a pipe is your only comfort as you lie uneasy, and try to kill time, until sunrise brings the solace of a cup of tea. After the horrors of the night, we rouse ourselves with a certain amount of physical refreshment, and in the open, the air is cool and pleasant. Having accomplished a rough and ready toilette, we all seem better, and look infinitely more fit than on our arrival the previous evening. Heavisides supervises Office and Matches in the preparation of a capital breakfast, so that in the course of an hour or so we are ready to inspect our new place of sojourn. It is easily travelled over, and presents in some places plots of really delightful flowers and foliage, the latter on a small scale and of the shrub order, the floral growths being large and brilliant; but, taking it as a whole, the place is generally only occupied by shrub growth and the cactus. On the island there is a woebegone flag-staff, with broken ropes and stays waving helplessly in the air behind our den, not far from it a building yard and some lime-kilns, while at the farther end from the landingplace is the Governor's house, and a native kraal of some dozen huts, all and everything of a most primitive description, the storehouse of the Mozambique Company being the most pretentious edifice on the island. One or two well-built, comfortable-looking houses, such as that of Senhor Sarmento, are dotted near this, but my stay on the island was not sufficiently long to make me acquainted with their internal organization. I hear from Dr. Roberts and Lieutenant Sugden, who remained after I had departed with Mr. Heavisides, that they

were most comfortable, and that at the hands of one or two of their owners, my friends met with kind hospitality.

Mid-day was marked by a rare sight for the curiosity of the Kaffirs, who were not a little inquisitive regarding us. This event was none other than Lieu-



OBSERVATIONS AND OBSERVERS.

tenant Sugden, sextant in hand, taking observations and time. This was, indeed, a point of interest and wonder to the assembled throng of dusky spectators. Great was the speculation by gesture and gutturals as to what witchery this new white man might be performing, and, as is usual with the Kaffirs, most of the comments and opinions hazarded took a humorous form of expression, and gave rise to much fun, laughter, and actions

of delight. The observations completed, Lieutenant Sugden, while pouring the quicksilver of his artificial horizon trough back into the bottle, let overflow a few globules upon the sand, which flashed brightly in the sun as they ran about. This slight accident brought the onlookers into a frantic state of excitement, and as they danced about at a respectful distance

from the sparkling particles, one youth more daring than the rest went down on elbows and knees to endeavour to collect what he doubtless deemed precious. As quick as thought our gallant officer whipped one of the magnifiers from his sextant, and bringing it into action between the already scorching sun and the quicksilver hunter's skin, evoked from that individual such a yell, accompanied by such a leap, that a general stampede of his terrified fellows, in which he joined when he had sufficiently recovered to do so, cleared the ground of our uninvited audience. This incident and a wonderful cure wrought by Dr. Roberts on one of the natives, brought many curious eyes to bear on the hut from all points



THE LOCAL PRACTITIONER.

of vantage, and finally a medicine man was seen to arrive and, standing opposite the hut where we were sitting smoking under the shade of the "stoup" next morning, glared in a most determined manner at the two workers of witch-craft—as no doubt my worthy companions were now looked upon as being, for a considerable period—then mumbling something and making various signs, he stalked off with much circumstance and import, evidently having annulled any

ill effects that might result from the strange charms which they might be working upon his people or the land and its produce.

The medicine man was not the only visitor who came unbidden to glare and glower upon us new-comers. The interior of the hut was an impossible resort, the open air a risky chance of relief, for even the most favourable mildness that the winter sun could shed approached sunstroke. To sit under the shelter of the "stoup"—which, being interpreted, means ground veranda with the shelter of elongated thatch—was the only position available with any degree of comfort. Here we sat down, and here we were interviewed by the pigs from the



adjacent stye. Running riot in every filth that could adhere to their bristles, every mother's son of this portion of the population of Aruanguae would present itself now and again, giving an inquiring grunt as if to say, "What a brave boy am I!" Hounding them off by word, action, or missile was but to encourage their attentions. and, humorous as they at times might be to the weary eye and the inactive brain, they became an intolerable nuisance to me during the brief stay that I made upon this unsavoury spot. What Dr. Roberts and Lieutenant Sugden must have suffered, whose acquaintance with them, I have learnt, culminated in meeting one of these pigs' progeny done up at a banquet, can be more easily imagined than described.

Under the "stoup's" scanty shelter we sat, therefore, as a sort of protectionary measure, much as one will take mud baths or drink a series of nauseating waters. And sitting thus, groups of gentlemen decked for

the occasion with feathers, and equipped with knives, fighting-sticks, and woodchoppers of most deadly construction, came and stood opposite us with an amount of attention that perhaps was more cruel than they These inflictions were occasionally varied by the visits of the (shall I say) gentler sex, with many soft ejaculations, witty and uncomplimentary, I doubt not. Most notable was an ancient dame who had passed the Scriptural span by many a year. How weary life must be can never occur to this extraordinary creature as she passed and repassed our den, always making good her presence to us by a curtsey and the reiteration of "Sing-a-boo-n, Tabac-tabac-tabac." A more midnight hag than this lady it would be hard to conceive, but with a pipe of tobacco or a little snuff, a glamour of gratitude would alter her face, and her voice might almost sound musical as she uttered her thanks. Why she was permitted to exist was a mystery to me and must remain so. She was not a witch woman, still the natives had a kindly deference for her. She, even at her age, was not decrepid. Why, therefore, could the Portuguese authorities see her, generation after generation, cumbering the ground without making a commodity of her in the slave market?

You and I will never know, and this old receptacle of strange and wondrous life will shuffle off the mortal coil without the telling of strange dark secrets of the trade in human flesh and blood going on even now while she whines out, "Tabac-tabac-tabac," as it did when nigh a century ago when she clicked and carolled love phrases.

The curse of Aruanguae, over and above all other afflictions, was a youth whose persistency equalled, if not overbalanced, the energy of the mountain-climbing "Excelsior." His strange device was an old biscuit tin.

Lieutenant Sugden writes to me in a most pathetically graphic tone of this happy brute, in answer to a letter sent by me to him when we were separated:—
"By placing the right hand inside a large biscuit tin and working with the other digits on the surface, he contrives to create the most horrible din imaginable. He seems to play with his whole body, and struts along as proud as the drum-major of the Grenadier Guards Band. He is a bit of a dandy, having a parting in his woolly pate made with a razor or some sharp instrument, and a decorative tuft worked with wax on his comb. He carries a very large snuff-box in his ear. In bed (a concrete one), and with this amateur drummer passing through the premises five or six times a day, imagine one's brain!

"A traveller, I forget his name, has said, 'How sweet it is in the stilly hours of night to hear these primitive children of nature lu-luing to each other. The men first, then the women, then the children, all keeping time by the clapping of hands! Prolong this to the early hours of morning, and you can gather how pleasant it must be to lie fever-stricken, when the slightest sound is magnified on the drum of the ear, and becomes unbearable, for this youth to serenade with his biscuit-box and lu-luing. Such is one's reward for having bestowed upon him a present in the shape of the hind leg of a donkey, too high for white men to tackle. Lu-lu and eat, lu-lu and eat, sometimes until 2 a.m.' Such a description, indeed, far

from exaggerates the monotonous horror of a vigorous genius of this stamp, and in Kaffir land their name is legion."

Such was the life or existence at Aruanguae during my sojourn there, and, brief as it was, it seemed all too long to fit within the space of one little week.

We were all more or less ill through the influences of climate, bad food and worse water, but, worst of all, enforced idleness.

This last complaint will kill more surely than any other that can be experienced in a tropical climate. Fight against lassitude, laziness, or what you care to call it, it is quite impossible to invent an artificial occupation that will so engage mind and body as to foster health. The deadly results of the demon idleness are strongly marked in the circumstances of the Portuguese in the latitudes I write

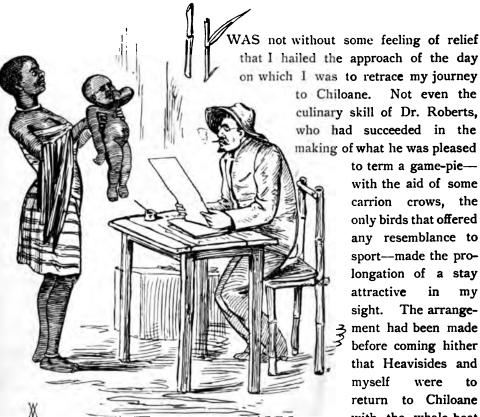
of, and it is curious to note the contrast between the genuine native and the offspring of the settlers, though they may have a family record of generations in the country. The true son of the soil is never idle any more than the monkey in the

THE TERROR.

palm grove. He will find some means of keeping himself busy, even if it be only in mischief; and, indeed, the only time he will assume any laxity is when it dawns upon him that he has to perform certain duties. The settler, and even the cross-breeds or half-blacks of them, seem hopeless in this matter, and it is characteristic of the Portuguese lord of the land that he will foster this idleness as an attribute of distinction, and, cultivating his finger nails to an inordinate length, to show that he does no work, looks down with contempt upon the English exploiter, calling him "naviee," and considering him only fit to dig after the manner of a negro and a slave.

CHAPTER VIII.

BECALMED.



making of what he was pleased to term a game-piewith the aid of some carrion crows, the only birds that offered any resemblance to sport-made the prolongation of a stay attractive in my The arrangesight. ment had been made before coming hither that Heavisides and were myself to return to Chiloane with the whale-boat on her retracing her

Not even the

A considerable amount of trouble was evinced in the securing of passports, without which we could not stir, nor could the captain or his crew be permitted to so much as make preliminary arrangements with the boat unless armed with these stamped and signed documents of Portuguese authority. At the "Africanda," or seat of customs, the authorities lacked the necessary stamps for the making good these precious warrants, and this involved such an amount of signing and countersigning by officials and witnesses, that had we been negotiating the purchase of the colony instead of permission to quit it, greater commotion could scarcely have taken place. Our arrangements were at last apparently brought to a conclusion, when it was discovered by some shrewd limb of authority that the wife of our captain, who was to travel back with us, was the mother of an infant of some three months, and that for this precious freight a passport had not been procured.

In vain was it to attempt to argue or expostulate that this precious freight was, as it were, part and parcel of the mother, a nameless nonentity. No, stern and resolute governing authority held that it was an individual requiring a permit to travel out of the district and cognizance of the province of Aruanguae. and at the eleventh hour the mother and child had to be produced and exam ned, a name improvised for the tiny voyager, and a document drawn out, signed and sworn to, and paid for at exorbimost tant rate, before we

THE LUST OF THE FLESH.

last, these preliminaries being adjusted, we awaited the morrow, when we were to

were permitted to

take it afloat.

part company with the other half of our group-Lieutenant Sugden and Dr. Roberts remaining with the stores to await "further orders," while Heavisides and myself returned to Chiloane. This was a-red-letter day, for our friend Dörrbecker had sent us a princely present of prime buffalo meat, the result of a brilliant day's hunting. The conduct of the natives under the influence of fresh meat is very remarkable. The great hunks of flesh having to be divided are slung up under the shade of the stoup, and underneath these joints the Kaffirs gather together, singing the praises of the prospective feast. All other circumstances are now dwindled to insignificance, and business of much import occupies the mind and body of every nigger in the household; for has not "Gom-cule" arisen and issued orders for the preparation of the banquet, and have not the children of "Gom-cule-in-kos-ama," the mighty Rhadi-cule, the Father of voices, the Thunder, brought green corn on the stalk to garnish the meat withal? Yes, and should it be our last, a wheaten loaf shall deck the table. Office and Matches, with their subordinate vassals, skip about the stewpot at the direction of Heavisides, the aforesaid Gom-cule, and as the setting sun burns itself out in the reddened waters of the West, we sit down to a most satisfactory repast. The Kaffirs know a good thing when they get it in the shape of food, or, as they term it, "scorf." It is not a very gratifying sight to watch a group of them round a meal of fresh meat, for they will worry and tear at it in a most greedy manner, only dropping off from sheer repletion, and then returning to it on the slightest chance of being able to add to their already gorged condition. While we sat smoking after our repast, we could hear these dusky diners discoursing over the debris of the carcass, for, not satisfied with the meat apportioned to them, they were busy with rougher parts that had been thrown aside as offal.

We sat gossiping over the chances of the future, and such matters as ways and means. On the table stood a formidable gin-bottle of the "square-face" order. Enter at the door my rescuer, the tall gaunt mate of the whale-boat, clad in his old overcoat and white night-cap. With certain preliminary obeisance he announces the coming of his superior officer, who, clad in an old railway guard's uniform coat, and with a solemn, grand, eloquent tone, delivers himself of a speech, which, by action, is directed to Heavisides and the gin-bottle. Heavisides gazes, in an amused manner, at the receding figures of the padrone and the mate, and then falls a-laughing, and when he has sufficiently recovered, he translates for us the

oration of the man of the sea, which was to this effect: "If you sleep with that wife to-night (pointing to the bottle), the sun will be high in the heavens ere you waken to-morrow, whereas I wish to sail by daybreak." Laying the sage suggestion to heart, we turned in amongst our blankets, and, notwithstanding the attentions of the busy insects, slept soundly until the early clarion of the indefatigable rooster warned us to arouse and prepare for departure.



CARRION.

Whatever the vicissitudes of weather we experienced on our journey hither may have been, they were fully counterbalanced by the calm of the return voyage. Calm, dead calm, made the process of navigation tedious to the very extremity of endurance. So utterly devoid of breeze was the sea, even in the open, that the sails hung uselessly against the masts, and with much noise and bustle our crew plied their unwieldy oars. In listless languor, my comrade and I

lay in the shade of the stern of the now almost empty boat. Empty, did I say? Alas, what was absent in bulk was fully made up in the strength of odour that came from the cargo we had now aboard. I have mentioned the affection evinced by the Kaffir for fresh buffalo meat; this is, however, a mild affair in comparison with the estimate in which he holds flesh that has become putrid. Under these circumstances, it presents to the Kaffir epicure a vision of gastronomical delights that throws him into a state of excited anticipation. It is a horrible sight to see a group of Kaffirs round a maggot-infested carcass, the stench of which is overpowering even at a considerable distance from the banqueting-place. As ill fortune would have it, an amount of the buffalo meat, of which we had partaken with so much relish, had fallen to the portion of the captain and crew of our boat, and, in a high state of decay, it hung in ghastly, gangrened festoons Oft in the stilly night, some of the mariners would round the inside of the hull. arise, and, stirring the embers of the galley fire, cook portions of this stuff, poisoning further the already heavy and poisonous atmosphere—for we were hugging the shore along mangrove reaches—eat and jabber, jabber and eat, then snuff and grunt themselves to sleep. Then another batch would arouse these to their post of duty, and proceed to perform the same operations with the filthy flesh of the buffalo. It was almost unendurable, but remonstrance would have been of no avail, and I fear had one in desperation attempted casting the offal overboard, the act would have been followed by one's own disappearance in direction.

It was truly a contrast to our former experience on board the same craft. The eternal row of the niggers, their discordant songs as they bent to the huge oars, the grunting, puffing, and ejaculations over the pushing poles, especially by an adept at this form of navigation, dubbed by Heavisides "Johnny-over-the-lift," on account of the marvellous angle to which he could incline his body over the side of the boat, and recover the perpendicular without losing his balance. The shrill, incessant talk of the padrone's wife as she squatted in the bow, and the strident tones of the mate at the rudder, lecturing her upon her matrimonial obligations, ceased not neither day nor night during this sluggish, weary journey, but all was eclipsed by the performance of some of the strong-winded members of the crew as they cleft the morning mists with fantasias on an awful instrument of torture in the shape of a primitive foghorn. In vain did we try to shut out or deaden these noises and odours by burying ourselves under rugs until we were

nearly smothered. To sit up and gaze at the unvaried lines of mangroves and fœtid mud banks, with the bright, flashing groups of birds, long-legged, snipelike creatures, and big-billed kingfishers, and the hovering huge hawks, poising



JOHNNY-OVER-THE-LIFT.

themselves in the odour of our unsavoury cargo of carrion buffalo flesh, or to gaze out at the painfully dazzling waters, was to rack the head with dizzy pains and almost to fall with the effort of keeping erect.

When we passed by Singune and made for the further point of Chiloane, though a little wind had sprung up in our favour, it was an endless journey along the swamp side of the island. And at last, having reached our destination, Heavisides and I dropped languidly over the boat's side and reeled waist deep in the water, like men stricken with a palsy, while we struggled towards the dry sand, where we fell—useless and beaten—more than sat down sick in body and spirit, until the delighted antics of the faithful "Charlie" round us gave a tone of encouragement and an idea that we at least had finished the cruel journey and were welcomed back to our island home, however rough it might be.



A FOG HORN.

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under

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CHAPTER IX.

THE COMMENCEMENT OF CAPTIVITY.



MY PRISON.

cu mstances "stone walls do not a prison make nor iron bars a cage." It has, however, been frequently exemplified that without the assistance of either walls or bars, captivity is a most actual possibility. This became strongly impressed upon me when I found myself sojourning in Chiloane, monarch of nothing that I surveyed. Though unfettered, I was not free. I was an unwilling alien, amongst a people whose occupation in the island was, though enforced, still that of authority—a

that

various

people whom I instinctively disliked and who in turn hated me for the fact that, inconsiderable item as I might be, I was a dust fleck of the great nation which had stayed their hands in the hideous trade of "black ivory" to such a paralyzing degree

that any action, taken as it now is by the Portuguese of East Africa, in assisting and participating in slave trading must be carried out with secret and stealthy step, as by thieves in the night. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that, left up on this island, on the very threshold of what at first seemed the opening of new ground, new enterprises, and new experiences, I should lie helpless on my cork bed in a veritable Portuguese slave hut, gazing through the gruesome trap-door in the ceiling through which many (how many?) poor dusky creatures had been thrust into the roof-place during the times of prosperous trading, or conning over the pages of a tattered copy of Lord Byron's poems, I should sardonically say to my shadow on the wall, "I am the prisoner of Chiloane."

Heavisides and I having recovered our legs, he gave directions as to our small baggage to "Office," and we found ourselves once more in the sandy roadway leading through the street of Banyan traders' houses to the dwelling-place hired "Charlie" explained to his master how "Bass" Crampton was very ill, and how he was carried to Bass Pinto's, and that Bass "Capietan" had gone with him, and that Charlie was very much alone and his heart was sore for his master's return. Arrived at the hut we found it even so. It seemed a desolate, dreary place with its bare walls and crumbling concrete floor. The only furniture we could boast was some empty packing-cases for seats, and a large box with a door, wrenched from one of the store-rooms at the back, placed across it, to serve as the solitary table in the general room where we took our meals. The only refreshment we could find was a small stone bottle about one-third full of gin, and of this we partook, standing in sore need of it. When somewhat revived by this unforeseen stimulant, Heavisides poised the bottle in his hand, and, contemplating it, said, " Mac, boy, I am glad it was here, for it may save us a fever, but isn't it a shame that that scoundrel (he had now come to refer to Captain Limejuice by that appellation, a significant circumstance in a man of eighteen years' hard life amongst the roughest Africans) should have left such a temptation knocking about in the way of that poor boy Charlie? Hang it, man, it might have maddened him, and we might have met the poor devil running amuck instead of dancing with joy at the sight of us. Do you know, man," pointing to the bottle, "that is more irresistible to a nigger than the most tempting blandishments of his lady-love." Alast! I had ceased to marvel at any acts of our gallant commander, and could only speculate with serious misgiving as to what might be his next move toward ourselves. When our cork bed and rugs came up from the boat, we could do nought but rest and chat, so utterly worn were we with the fatigues and discomforts of the voyage. These chats with Bill Heavisides were very pleasant, and remain a pleasant memory. I found him a man of much refinement and attainments, which all the wildness of his roving existence had not



SCATTERED "SCORF."

blighted, and his natural keenness of observation gave to his experiences, when narrated, a charm seldom to be found in "travellers' tales." Added to this, he had a buried past which every now and then peeped out, and gave mysterious piquancy to the rich, deep voice as he spun his yarns. His treatment of his

negroes was a study, and they loved him devotedly from the meanest up to his body-man, Office, whom he had first befriended during the Zulu war, and who had in turn saved his master's life, and would, I am certain, "wade in blood" for him now. The cost of passports and the money which we had left with the doctor and Lieutenant Sugden, little as it was, had left us well-nigh penniless—a most unsatisfactory state of things even in an out-of-the-way place like Chiloane. At sun-set we sat down to some light "scorf" which had been cooked for us, and we discussed it with but meagre appetite, for, though it was a savoury sort of olla-podrida, we were still scarcely stomach-strong since the experiences of the festoon of buffalo meat in the boat. At the back of our hut was the kitchen and Kaffir house, and we could hear the animated voices of the boys mingled with those of visitors, attracted doubtless by the return of Office. Presently another reason for their excited jabber and hilarity made itself apparent, for our hut was pervaded by the most unholy and indescribable odour. "They are cooking more of that infernal buffalo!" shouted Heavisides, as he sprang to his feet and went thundering to the open back door, with deep Kaffir anathemas. It was too true. I staggered out to the front door, where, stumbling over the threshold, I fell flat upon my face in the sand, glad even to gain the open air in such a position. Having picked myself into a sitting posture, I gazed through the perspective of the passage at the pantomime proceeding in the back premises. Heavisides, still thundering, might be observed kicking about Kaffirs, pots, and burning faggots, in a most indiscriminate manner, and until he, the stench, and everything else had subsided, I elected to accept my position under the stoup. The boys received orders as to their dietary observances, and they sat down sadder and wiser men to discuss less "gamey," but more wholesome food.

This was my last experience of "high buffalo."

We lit our pipes and took a turn down to the seashore in the cold night air to give the house time to be ventilated. Then sauntering back, we reclined upon our beds sipping tea, reading and chatting, when, just upon turning-in time, the face of our commander presented itself at the still open window. He now entered, and presented a strange figure for a man with Kaffir carriers at his command, for it was his boast that every man could carry what belonged to him; at least, that he could, and therefore others ought. He had walked across the swamp thus burdened and unattended, and in the mists of the place had lost his way, all which—with its incidental adventures—he narrated with much natural humour

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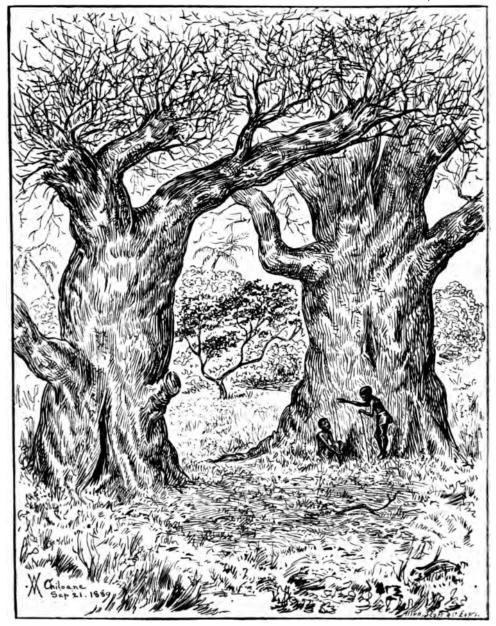
and many expletive embellishments. Heavisides offered a kindly admonition as to the risks of such a course of procedure in a country where the Kaffir was willing to be guide and beast of burden, but the gallant one soon brought him to a sense of his superior knowledge of such matters as well as all others, and this, with the irritating fact that he was suffering from fatigue, which he could not well disguise, made the rest of the evening lively, if not entertaining. Next morning we made way to Singune on foot, as the steamer in which our comrade, George Crampton, who had sufficiently recovered to travel, was to leave for home, had been announced as in sight by the firing of the ordnance at our end of the island.

I found Crampton sadly changed, but though weak and haggard, the fever had not diminished his good spirits or natty habits, and, well-shaven and groomed, he looked quite a credit to such a band as we were gathered to bid him farewell and wish him God-speed, though I told him since my return to England that on the day I helped him to totter towards the boat that was to bring him to the steamer, I never expected to see him hale and hearty again. Our gallant captain elected to go with him as far as Delagoa Bay, and transact some further mysterious business with its attendant delay and expenses. We held a short council with him, and, with many imprecations upon himself of a disastrous kind if he did not come back by the very next steamer, or in any unforeseen event keeping him, aye, even death, he called, in theatrical declaim, upon the dazzling blue of the sky a bove him and all it meant, to witness that he would send us ample funds and instructions. Thus we bid good-bye to our commander, who left us on this uncongenial shore, hard pressed in every way, but worst of all by uncertainty and idleness.

After a genial hour with Senhor Pinto, during which the frequent blowing of the steamer's whistle in the offing told of the usual tardiness of the business lazily carried on by the Portuguese officials, we at last saw the Dunkeld's paddlewash whiten the sea, and she moved away. Heavisides and I, proud possessors of a few rupees which we had extracted from the captain, wended our way through the umbrageous swamp-land to our home at the other end of the island. It was a pleasant walk, and the many happy natives we met upon the road greeted us with their deferential scrape of the foot and "Sing-a-boon"—Heavisides every now and again exchanging a few words of greeting with them. It is curious to see a great warlike negro coming towards you with knit brows and defiant gait, suddenly step a pace to right or left, and as you pass thus salute you with much

deference. Breaking from the road and plunging into the pleasant cool of the grass and foliage, we came to a group of great trees which I have christened "the giants of Chiloane." These great monarchs of the place dwarf every form of vegetation in comparison with their enormous size. At their tops, I doubt not, ages ago they were cut short, and kept thus cropped by passing hurricanes, for their height is in no way in proportion to their circumference, and they present the appearance of huge pollard willows stretching out slender branches, which, as it was winter, were bare, but, to judge from the dead leaves I found strewn beneath them, these latter are large like those of the walnut tree, and when in their prime the shade they afford must be delightful for encampment and rest. I understand the fruit is very agreeable, and from the husks of it, also rotting on the ground, I should judge to be, when ripe and fresh, something like a very much overgrown red Chili pod. Under these trees we sat down, and under these trees came natives taking up positions here and there on the shadow side of the great tree trunks, each some thirty to thirty-five feet in diameter. Cushioned in the natural arm-chairs of these giants of Chiloane the happy-go-lucky seemed to be arranging themselves for a sojourn, as I afterwards found out was the fact, and afterwards discovered the reason to be the midnight festivity of song and dance, to which fete they had travelled and gathered themselves together, taking, as they do in every circumstance of their existence, ample time to carry out their intentions. us, however, the slanting rays of the sun suggested the necessity of clearing out of the swamp land before night set in, and, bracing ourselves to the effort, we soon passed the last of the little settlements in the cultivated spaces through the arid tract on to the slope that I have before described as leading to our cottage door.

Here was at least a citadel, here at least were shelter, blankets, and a haven of rest. Here also were the expectant negroes, and here was the paucity of the wherewithal to satisfy them, for with the exception of a bag of flour, half a bag of rice, some weevil-eaten ships' biscuits, and a little tea and sugar, all stores had been carefully stored by Captain Limejuice, with strict orders that no one without a signed permit from him was to "break bulk." This, with the fact that we had no means of communication either south or north unless at long intervals, when we might wait for the ships, the tardy ships, that might never come unless, "weather permitting," they did so within a month of each other, struck me as the refinement of brutality on the part of the representative of English enterprise, under whose guidance we were supposed to be "exploiting." Be that as it may



THE "GIANTS" OF CHILOANE.

have been, with what little faith he had in our prospects, Heavisides marked a rough calender upon the wall, and placing a line, arrow barbed, upon the date at which the next boat might hear news from the outer world by, he said, "We will mark it 'expect' him back, but come what may, I would never ask to exchange any position for the horror of last night, when he was in full blast."

Such counsel did I take unto myself as words of wisdom, and, with the sonorous voice of "Gom-cule" making inquiries amongst his Kaffirs for their comfort and welfare, I betook myself to considering how fortunate I was to find vicissitudes alleviated by the circumstance of such companionship.



chatted and smoked. albeit tobacco was a precious commodity with us, notwithstanding that twenty-eight pounds of the coveted article lay in the Customs of the Portuguese, to a certain extent a commodity meant for our comfort and support, but which we were. as I have indicated already, powerless to touch. We nevertheless smoked and chatted, and looking upon the blank walls of our slave place of a sleeping-room, we determined to decorate the walls with frescoes as fancy might suggest.

The hut was our

castle, and for what time we might sojourn in it the decoration of the walls would surely be a pastime and the result harmless.

Should that hut be still standing and the wal suntouched by the whitewash brush, the armorial bearings of our various houses will be found emblazoned in all the glories of such colours as were to be found in some boxes of coloured crayons I had with me, while here and there a political figure may be seen coquetting with the latest form of native beauty encountered by us in our island home.

CHAPTER X.

"A FRIEND INDEED." IFE under the circumstances of such meagre ways and means as we possessed was far from a cheerful outlook, but we made the most of it, and, with the aid of a few books, a little sketching, and a good deal of talking, the days seemed likely to pass with an equable quietude. plentiful lack of pence, and the absence of such trifling details as food, however, became rather impressive, especially when the negro element, not yet quite recovered from the taste for strong meats, began to look askance at the diminishing rice bag. Climatically, circumstances were against us, though I have no doubt that, with proper nourishment and medicinal precautions, with all its dangers, such atmospheric vagaries as we experienced might be fought successfully, provided one thing, that you had occupation - mental and physical occupation—of some specific kind. This we lacked, and the combination of circumstances with the addition of what we might command in the shape of sustenance being bad at the best, especially water, depression

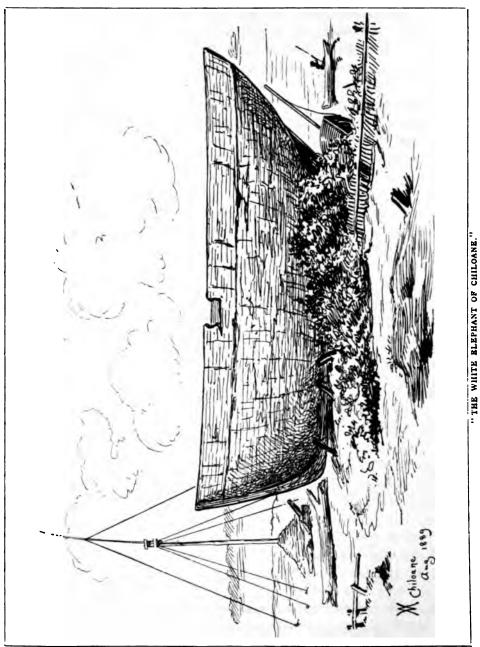
and fever gave themselves free play with us. Privation is a sorry sort of experience, and the indulgence of it shows poor humanity how very dependent it is upon small mercies. If you are a smoker, or have any sympathy with those whom I have heard anti-tobacconists term "slaves to the pernicious weed," you may imagine the trials we experienced with time hanging heavily with us, unable to boast a pipe of tobacco between us! The distress of this was con-

siderably augmented by the knowledge we possessed, that virtually belonging to us there were some twenty pounds weight of the fragrant weed lying uselessly at the Custom House.

We tried the usual substitutes of the castaway, such as pieces of hemp, dried leaves of various sorts, but with little or no success. The negroes smoke but very little in this part of the country except the women, who, though they do not make a habit of it—possibly through the fact that they cannot always command the wherewithal—are as partial to a whiff as any Irish matron who ever trudged to market or to Mass. One and all of them snuff. From the earliest period of existence, that is a definite and separate condition in life. The Kaffir has a hole penetrating the lobe of the ear—generally the left, often both—and in this he wears his snuff-box.

The manufacture of this snuff is a mysterious rite that is observed with peculiar care by the negro. Its usual basis is tobacco or some weed approximating to that plant. However he compounds it, he is not satisfied unless it is of such strength as to turn the whites of his eyes blood-red and cause the tears to course down his cheeks when he applies the snuff-spoon to his olfactory nerves. The ceremony of taking snuff is a trying ordeal, for no Scotchman in moments of hospitable warmth could offer his box with greater gusto than a Kaffir, and the refusal of such a mark of friendship would be a breach of all uses and observances of etiquette. It takes, therefore, some fortitude and determination to undergo the snuff process when in friendly commune with a native. If it will make him cough, sneeze, cry and grunt, what must it not be to the nostrils of an unaccustomed white man?

It is a habit from which the African evidently derives much comfort, as much possibly, as the Chinese do from the use of opium. If he is vexed, slighted, or mentally upset in any way, he squats and snuffs. If he is bested in a bargain or a battle, he squats and snuffs. If he is jubilant over good fortune or happy in his mind, he squats and snuffs; and when he is without snuff a certain very bright portion of his existence becomes dimmed until he again finds opportunity to replenish his box. These snuff-boxes are very various, but generally of such a shape as to be carried in the hole in the ear, otherwise they generally are suspended from the waist. Native urchins will track you from afar and follow for long distances should you carry your gun, on the chance of picking up empty cartridge cases out of which to form snuff-boxes. The spoon with which the Kaffir conveys the



powder from the snuff-box to his nose is an important item of the paraphernalia, and very often is worn in another hole in the opposite ear to the one adorned with the box. Should you boast in your canteen apparatus such a luxury as a salt or mustard spoon, it will soon be missing, and you may rest assured that it has

been confiscated for the purpose of snuffing, and adorns the ear-hole of some nigger with much effect.

The weary days were not much varied during this period with us. A laxity draws itself over the fever-touched that makes the creation of occupation well-nigh impossible.

Down by the seashore one might court respite from the heat of the air, the burning glare of the sun and the reflected glare of the sand, but here, again, came in the ban of Portuguese utter neglect of all decent sanitation. All kinds of refuse are thrown up on / below the shore high - water mark,



and these, washed down, are caught upon the coral and pumice reefs, which, at low tide, are under the rapid influence of the tropical sun, create festering fœtid beds emitting poisonous exhalations that drive inland and which make a sojourn near the beach as dangerous as it is unpleasant. There was but one spot that

was available, and that only at certain times, which was entirely dependent upon the direction of the wind. This place was under the shade of the hull of an unfinished boat that, I suppose, still lies idly rotting under the action of the sun and rain. "The white elephant of Chiloane" we dubbed this hulk, for, as far as I could glean its history, it is nothing else to the Portuguese, who claim it as a sort of treasure-trove. It appears that one Karl Auspitch alias Fischer escaped to Chiloane, bringing with him a large amount of bullion, the result of a robbery he committed on the bank at Johannesberg.

Under these circumstances he was received with open arms by the Governor, who was most accommodating in the matter of negotiating the ill-gotten wealth of this man, and giving him all the protection that could be desired for so distinguished a visitor. Fischer seems to have been comfortable enough under this arrangement, and to have settled down into permanent residence upon the island, where he started the building of this ship for trading purposes. Having to visit Bazarute in order to procure further materials for his enterprise, the Governor extended his paternal solicitude to furnishing him with an escort. Indeed, so well was he cared for, that, having reached his destination, he died from an unfortunate dose of poison, and the balance of his illgotten gains and the shell of his ship were quietly confiscated by the Portuguese. There the hull stands to-day on its rickety stocks, slowly but surely breaking up; a fitting monument of the useless obstructive character of the rulers of the soil. The Portuguese do not seem to have the energy or the ability to utilize what, so far as it is advanced, is a well-built vessel. She is not suitable for the Arab "merchants." who do mysterious business at the island; and, for good reasons of their own, the Banyan, or British Indian traders, will have nothing to do with her, so there stands "the white elephant of Chiloane," waiting for some upheaval of the sea to wash it out of sight for ever.

Thus would we endeavour to pass the time of weariness until the date fixed, and marked "expect" upon the almanac came round, and the report of the little brass cannon at the Custom flagstaff announced that the incoming coast steamer had been sighted. I had been for some days down with fever and dysentery, and therefore helpless in the matter of perambulation, so Heavisides set out for Singune in Dörrbecker's boat (the mighty hunter had come down from Aruanguae the previous day). Toward evening my companion returned, fagged and in a high state of disgust and disappointment. The only indication of memory that we

experienced on the part of our much-protesting Captain was the arrival of a pair of riding-breeches for Heavisides, and four boxes of cigars as a little friendly present for Senhor Pinto from the same considerate donor. Here, indeed, was a

fulfilment of the surmise of my comrade when he wrote upon the diary "expect." No letters of advice, no message by anyone on the ship, no tribute of responsibility for our wants save the ironical testimony of a pair of breeches sent in care of the agent of the Castle Line, and a consignment of cigars upon which the duty had not been paid!

Life certainly now looked very blank to us, for as well as ourselves, there were the niggers to think of, and our establishment in this department had increased to the extent of a small boy whom Heavisides and I purchased from my rescuer, the mate of the whale-boat-him of the nightcap-for the modest price of six white pocket handkerchiefs in piece and a couple of parti-coloured loin-cloths. We could not go fishing, even in a "dugout" boat, without a stamped and high-priced permit, and as for game upon the island, it offered nothing more tempting than a couple of huge sea-hawks that hovered about during the day, and a school of carrion crows. There were, in the midst of the human sterility of the place, two people who claimed from us the consideration that they were "white men" in every sense. They were Guttling, the agent of the Castle Line of steamers. and Hüpfer, an agent and trader who had settled in the island but shortly before the

time of our arrival. They were both Dutchmen, I think, and showed us considerable personal consideration. Towards us, however, they held the somewhat difficult position of both having been appointed part agents for our goods and both having received the strict injunctions to part with none of the stores or give credit to any member of our expedition.

" BOB."

A couple of days after the arrival and departure of the coast steamer, I received a letter addressed to me at "The Mansion of Senhor Pinto," for, so it

seemed, the wretched hovel we occupied was the property of he of Singune. was a pleasant invitation from Herr Hüpfer to myself and Heavisides to come and dine with him that day in the cool of the evening. We had a most pleasant evening, hospitably enhanced by the conversational powers of our accomplished host and the accompaniment of the Manilla cheroots. He further proved his goodwill towards us by what, under the circumstances, was the most gracious and practical act he could do, that of offering financial assistance. This voluntary piece of good fellowship threw a very different halo over our circumstances, and we bade him good-night, I think, pretty distinctly showing him our gratitude for his unexpected service. Next morning there was real milk from the Banyan of the island, who kept a couple of Indian cows, and other luxuries to which we had been strangers, including a "spot" of Scotch whiskey at sunrise—that invaluable medicine to a sick man in these latitudes. This was the gift of our friend Hüpfer. This sudden acquisition of wealth and good fare, I think, saved us from severe sickness. held a consultation, and it was determined that, however bad our position might be, that of Doctor Roberts and Lieutenant Sugden must be worse, and that it would be better to concentrate our forces while we had the opportunity. So two mornings later Heavisides, accompanied by the faithful Office, left with Dörrbecker in his launch for Aruanguae, leaving me with Charlie and the piccaninny "Bob" to await his return with the other two exiles, and to await the further development of events.

CHAPTER XI.

SICK AND AFFLICTED.



MUST admit that the title of this chapter does not sound encourag-

> ing to the reader, who may so far have gallantly waded through the discursive records of my wanderings thus far, but I think I may say with "Our Mr. Jenkins," of Two Roses immortality, " It's not so dull as you think!" and, if perused, it may give some insight to the hut life of a traveller sojourning in such a place as Chiloane.

> I was enabled, with some

toil and difficulty, to get down as far as the beach and see the departure of Heavisides, but every limb was racked with pain, and I was most certainly booked for a period of ague—so frequently attendant upon fever and exposure to wet, such as I had experienced during the Sofala episode.

My condition was such that I found myself quite unable to move from my rugs and blankets next morning.

Never before had I, and never again shall I have, I most fervently hope, such an agonisingly acute knowledge of the details of my own anatomy.

I was now what our American friends would call "well fixed-up," but not to my own liking. I had with me Charlie and little Bob, a well-favoured negro of some nine years, whom Heavisides had purchased from the youth's "uncle," as has already been mentioned.

Bob was, however, happy with the change in his condition. Poor as the service he had entered upon might be, it must have been better than the existence to which his young body had been hitherto submitted. The dull white stripes across his poor little back too plainly showed how cruelly he had been treated.

He was a good little boy, was Bob, and, under the excellent tuition of Office, and with that wonderful imitative faculty belonging to his race, he had become a most useful hand. Besides these, there were some "boys" of Colquhoun and Williams's crowd lying ill out in the kitchen-house, so that, taking it altogether, with the paucity of wholesome food and plentiful lack of pence, we were a merry family!

Here, then, I lay on my cork bed, which, never very comfortable, now seemed intolerably hard. Next to the house was a Kaffir fisherman's circular hut, outside which his various wives and numerous children used to pound the mealies and sing their eternal love impromptus all day. Oh! that pounding of mealies! bad enough in its monotony to one in health, but to a sick man lying helplessly upon the ground a few yards from where it is going on, every thump of the great bamboo pounding-pole in the wooden tub was a separate and distinct agony during the whole monotonous proceeding, which would sometimes last all day, and ever accompanied by the song, the words of which may have been charming in their variety, but the tune of which held its uncompromising course of monotony on the self-same half-dozen notes, thus—



At night matters were little better, for the fisherman would return, or in his absence, "a nearer and dearer one still" would drop in upon the family group

and jabber. Jabber would be the order of the night until early morning, when silence would be but a brief respite, for bright chanticleer was very much in evidence at this establishment, and had apparently made up his mind that day should always break at about two o'clock in the morning, if one might judge from the high-toned voice with which he essayed to hail it. Nor would he desist until day would break, be that ever so remote a contingency; and when it did happen he would assume an air towards his hens and the world in general as though he had brought about that phase of nature called day, simply by his own supreme efforts.

This family was also possessed of a couple of lively cats, wherever they got them—cats of the English suburban order, domesticated to the extent of sleeping about under the thatch during the sunny hours of the day and making night hideous on some adjacent substitute for tiles during the far from silent watches of the night. All these circumstances might have proved highly entertaining to one in robust or rude health, but to a sick man, I say, they were well-nigh intolerable, and seem to me now like the memory of a hideous night-mare long drawn out.

Charlie was now *major domo* of our miserable establishment, and, in my condition, our whole ménage and the prospects of our existence were certainly very hopeless. During a few days of helplessness, with occasional paroxysms of delirium, my memory had become sadly blurred, and the neglected almanac had become so mixed in my disordered condition as to be well-nigh useless. In fact, there were periods at this time when I—

"Noted never the nightfall nor the day."

Medicines, I had none of any use to me, save some quinine, of which I had already absorbed quite sufficient to cause my head to ache as violently as did my limbs. Verily, I was in such a plight as to become almost indifferent as to what fate might finish the tedious horrors of this lonely agony. Human nature is very tenacious of life, and, with a certain amount of natural selection, guided by the hand of Providence, I eventually pulled through this veritable valley of the Shadow of Death.

To hark back to Charlie, as a personality, he was perhaps the ugliest Kaffir I have ever encountered. It is a well-worn adage, that looks are deceptive, and never was it more thoroughly exemplified than in the case of poor



Charlie. In this time of trial and vexation, he proved to have the gentleness of a woman and the faithfulness of a dog. Added to the poverty of the establishment, suspicion and discontent set in amongst the visitor negroes in the outer hut, who, though they had no right there, assumed like most squatters, even more rights and privileges than more legitimate claimants. One of them, who was sick of the fever, gave up the ghost, and, with much "keening" and tomtom beating, was borne to his last resting-place across the island. This quite finished the others, and I was grateful to learn that they made their way to the mainland in the dug-out of a friendly fisherman, making matters more comfortable for me from a report that I had a curse upon me. All these trials and sore afflictions had no effect upon the faithful Charlie and his little lieutenant Bob.

To be brief, Charlie undoubtedly saved my life as far as human aid had power. It must be remembered that I was the only Englishman on this Portuguese convict settlement, and that though French, Dutch, and even Germans may pass muster and find succour, be it known that the worthy tatters of past Portuguese glory look upon the English with an unalterable hatred and loathing, and the death of one of that accursed breed within their gates—by natural causes, of course—is a consummation to be devoutly wished.

Charlie was a great favourite with the fair sex. Indeed, I have frequently had to-"well pull the long bow" in the favour of his moral rectitude, through my window to the neighbouring fisherman, when that worthy, on his return, would discover that the fascinating Charlie had been a too frequent visitor during his absence. Like most men who are fortunate in the favours of the fair, he was especially careful of his personal appearance, so great was his delight when I made him a present of some spare portions of my wardrobe. My liberality was well repaid by the comicality of the figure he cut in these habiliments. Words would be inadequate, and a sketch but lamely describes his appearance. and watchful, he explained to me that the water, which we had to obtain from a well guarded by black Portuguese soldiers, being the property of "the authorities," and yielding a most unpalatable fluid at the best of times, was specially "doctored," as far as the libations doled out to me were concerned; in other words, I was to have my condition aggravated by poisoned water. Charlie was, however, equal to the occasion and, by a secret system of procuring other supplies of water through the cunning aid of his female friends, now from

next door, now from distances up the island, this fresh horror was successfully obviated.

Dysentery had added its distress to my now pretty well shattered frame, and one night, when I was well-nigh spent, Charlie, whom I had missed for some hours, came into my room, where I could see, from the crimson glow of what otherwise would be the whites of his eyes, he had been to a midnight orgie in which Kaffir rum and Cachu had played a prominent part. He looked very forbidding, and I feebly fondled my revolver beneath my blanket, fervently hoping that the poor brute was not going to run amuck with me. Fate was in his favour and in mine. He went to the can of filtered water, which I kept with jealous care in my room, and drank five large cupfuls of the precious liquid, then coming close to me he squatted with his hams upon his heels, and, taking the candle in his hand, scrutinised me closely; his face broke into a hideous grin, which I had soon reason to understand was a sympathetic smile, and in a deep, gentle voice, he said, "Bass, Char-rliee goot docketer." Then, pointing to my diaphragm, he began to spin his hands round each other, and, at the same time, a burring noise, ended with "Ach! no goot for Bass! Char-rliee goot docketer," this accompanied by the action of drinking. I assured him as best I could that I knew he was a most excellent doctor, and that I was suffering the pain he indicated, and that I would be more than grateful if he could cure me. He rose, evidently perfectly satisfied, and, bidding me good-night, went out.

This little episode somewhat dissipated my suffering, and I fell into a fevered sleep, and the sun was high before I was aware that Bob was moving about, cat-like, in the room. The youngster explained to me that Charlie had gone up into the swamp-land, and very shortly afterwards that individual came in, apparently fresh clothed and in his right mind, bearing with him a bunch of roots, resembling in appearance strips of sarsaparilla, and with a triumphant air withdrew from under his armpit a chicken which he had concealed there very adroitly. I may add that, though I could trust him with anything in the hut, when necessity on the part of his "Bass" or himself required it, Charlie was a most accomplished thief, and the property of the outer world of the island upon such occasions he looked upon as his natural spoils. The roots he boiled down, and, bringing a cup of the liquid to me presently, he bade me drink it. I was just in such a mood as to consider release at the hands of this well-meaning savage quite as pleasant as at those of the Portuguese. I drank.

While I was ruminating upon the strange flavour—something like the taste of an old parsnip—" docketer" Charlie poured the scalding contents of the saucepan containing the remainder of the decoction over my stomach, and began to rub vigorously with the palm of his hand. A pleasant numbness pervaded my aching body. Pain became altogether dulled, sight dimmed, and hearing was deaf to all sounds but a pleasant, indefinite music inside the head. Surroundings faded away, and a quiet feeling of universal relief imbued me. Was this the end, and was it passing away?

If so, the end and the passing are very, very pleasant after so much suffering.



CHAPTER XII.

CONVALESCENT.



ANY hours it must have been that I had slept when thrown into the sudden and heavy slumber by Charlie's medicine, for I had entirely missed the passing of the day, and another night of horror, for it was again morning when I awoke.

The sun was not yet up, but, to judge from external sounds, now become familiar time-tellers, it was close upon daylight.

My mouth was parched and hot, and I had no light. Indeed if I had I was too weak and listless to extend my hand for a cup of cold tea, which I knew would be on the floor close to my bed.

I was only pleasantly aware of the absence of pain, and was supremely happy to lie and gloat over the circumstance and try to think. This was a feeble effort that produced more somnolence of

a light but comforting kind. So, on and off, I dosed until the sunlight began to cut its way through the cracks of the window shutters and door.

Presently Bob came in, and, opening the windows, let in a stream of light and fresh morning air, and gave me the cup of tea to drink. It was

all delightful, and I felt inclined to laugh or cry, or do both, but I was too weak to do either, and I only lay in silent gratitude for the change in my condition.

Anon came Charlie, full of importance and bearing with him a bottle of milk and a potion of whiskey which Mr. Guttling had sent me. After the administration of these I once again began to feel in a small way that life was worth living.

CHARLI MEDECINE HE GOOD DOCTOR

Further, Guttling performed a good and thoughtful act by sending me the loan of a wooden armchair—most welcome luxury—into which Charlie lifted me like a great baby, blankets and all. Then taking the chair up with surprising ease, he carried the lot out into the open,

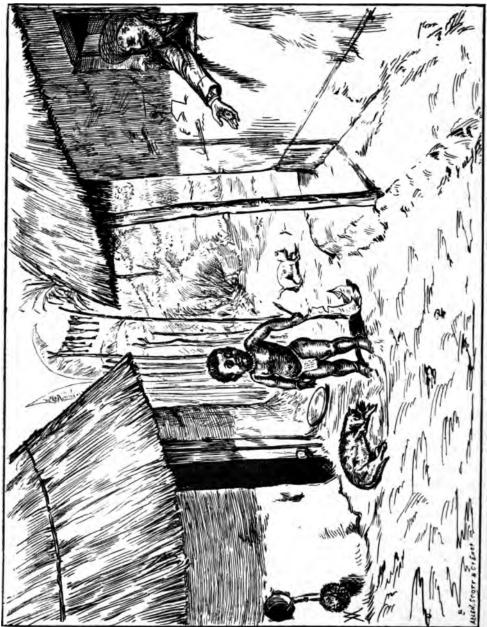
and planted his load down under the shade of the large trees in front of the hut.

These, indeed, were delicious transitions from the state of things I had experienced, and I felt a kind of listless pleasure in sitting out in the open and dreamily watching the passers-by or the children at play, until my "docketer" thought fit to carry me back, when I was glad to lie on my lowly bed again, for my head was too heavy for my shoulders. The room had been well sprinkled and swept, the place put in order, and all seemed fresh and new to me.

Charlie was very busy, and as the sun wore aslant and began to throw

its long shadows from the West, he entered the room, and, with the one expressive word, "Scorf," he set on the ground before me a portion of the chicken, cooked in very simple fashion, but hot and savoury.

And I did eat.



"MY NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOUR."

With this meal I felt mightily revived and strengthened, and was well able to sit up on my bed propped against the wall.

I had before endeavoured to teach Charlie in a Kindergarten fashion, and a very apt pupil I found him. My plan was to endeavour to express an object in rough simple sketch form, and then impress the sound of the name in spelling and pronunciation. Here is the actual lesson of this first evening towards recovery, torn from my sketch book, which will explain the *modus operandi*.

It will be noticed that the lesson is drawn from objects and circumstances that would be immediately fresh upon his memory; this, I found, simplified matters greatly.

Bob was too young and skittish to be of much avail to a sick man, but Charlie was most considerate and patient.

He was full of that natural humour so prevalent among the Kaffirs. They are very shrewd observers, and have an imitative faculty generally, if not always, bending towards humorous exaggeration that is wonderfully descriptive in its sounds and actions. After the lesson, he volunteered to give me a dramatic performance, which consisted of an imitation of the working of the steamer in which he had come, and which, being the only boat of the kind he had ever travelled in, seemed to have greatly impressed itself upon him. It was quite wonderful with what fidelity the various sounds were given, although only in gutturals. The very tones of the quartermaster "marking" as he cast the lead the boatswain's whistle, the wind in the rigging, the word of command from the bridge, the throb of the engines-this last made with an extraordinary deep note that seemed to come out of the earth, and a beating of his great chest with his fists all were aptly indicated, and nothing was omitted. He would have continued his entertainment ad libitum, but I knew how hazardous it is to allow these poor creatures to become excited. I curbed his enthusiasm, and told him I wanted to get to rest.

He insisted on my having another small dose of his mysterious medicine—this time cold—which I was nothing loth to take, as with the cold night air, there came a slight sneaking suspicion of returning pain.

Alone, I tried to read, but this was a failure, and, through the influence of the medicine and fatigue of the day, I soon dropped my book and then dropped off to sleep, and when I next was conscious it was to find the candle had burnt down into its socket (a bottle), and that for its light were substituted the rays of the rising sun.

I felt refreshed instinctively, stronger and actually hungry! This was easily satisfied, and, oh joy! I was able to smoke! During the morning I was able to potter about the room occupying myself with trifles, and in little fiddling ways—gradually gathered my scattered wits. I lolled out of the window frame and made friends with the youngest of the ladies of the fisherman's hut, who, after much shyness and staring with wide eyes at the strange being I must have appeared to her infantile Ethiopian eyes, she finally succumbed to an offer of sugar, and toddling up to the wall of my hut she did me the honour of devouring my saccharine gift with complacency and apparent satisfaction.

The arm-chair was a great boon, and having it moved into the larger general sitting-room for a change, I enjoyed the luxury of reading and smoking for some hours.

Culinary operations were proceeding with much stir out at the back, and a certain most savoury smell denoted that something of a very tasty kind had fallen in Charlie's way. Presently he laid the necessary implements for a banquet on the rude imitation of a table which occupied the sitting-room, and after a short space, accompanied by Bob, he entered in triumph bearing, trussed upon a stick, something that at first startled me, and then turned me sick. It looked like the charred remains of the little girl I had in the morning been making love to with a handful of sugar. In reality, it was a highly-developed monkey roasted. In my weak, nervous state, I could not look at it, much less commence dissecting it, for eating purposes—so human did it appear. Much to the surprise of my retinue of servants, I ordered its immediate removal, and was glad to satisfy what little appetite I might have regained with very meagre fare for the rest of the day.

I believe roast monkey is a very great delicacy, and I have little doubt had a small portion of it been offered me I might have eaten it with relish. Coming in such a ghastly human shape, I could not attack it, and I am quite satisfied to accept the word of more experienced travellers who have dined off it, and will not at any future time essay to preside over a roast monkey unless I am very hard pressed indeed, or have quite obliterated from my mental vision the memory of the one I saw upon a stick on this occasion.

I was still very weak, and my attenuated legs were swollen at the joints. My feet, which refused all offer of shoe leather, were like regulation Rugby foot-

balls. Charlie was wonderfully patient and attentive to me, carrying me out with the chair for an airing. Under these circumstances I managed to do a little sketching, and finally succeeded in accomplishing a water-colour drawing of Mr. Guttling's store, which I presented to that gentleman as a slight return for his kind considerations. There was some good luck attendant upon this little effort, for the fame of it spread amongst the Banyan traders, and I had many offers of commissions, of which I shall speak presently.

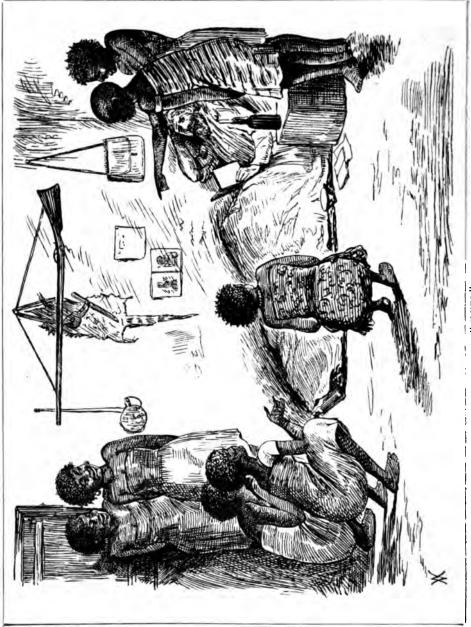
On the wall at the side of my bed were fixed two photographs of those who are dearest to me, the one on earth and the other in heaven—mother and child. These were objects of great interest to Charlie and Bob, and one day, having explained to the former the relationship of wife, a new light broke in upon him, and he expressed himself as wholly master of my wishes and requirements. He made great pantomime of the invaluable presence of a wife when a man was stricken with sickness. He knew all about it, and having so far recovered me from my illness, he was evidently bent upon leaving nothing untried for my complete recovery.

That very night, as I lay in my bed reading—I had retired early—he came in accompanied by, not one, but seven, Kaffir ladies, the pick and flower of his acquaintanceship—one, two, three, or all of whom were willing and ready to succour me in my helplessness. It was a somewhat novel and amusing, not to say embarrassing, position.

They jabbered and clicked in undertones. They turned over and examined everything with the inquisitiveness of children. They squatted round my bed and snuffed, and chatted, and laughed, and, in short, made themselves perfectly at home.

One lady, whose head was shaved as a sign of mourning, began to scrape her cranium with my hunting-knife. They one and all contemplated me with much quiet curiosity, as though I were a stuffed curiosity instead of a live human being. The flesh of my arms and chest was uncovered and they compared it with their own, much as ladies compare patterns with pieces of cloth when shopping. The photographs on the wall, of which they had evidently heard much from the gay cavalier who had brought them thus down upon me, were objects of great interest to them, so were the frescoes executed by myself and Heavisides.

Although they had no luggage they had evidently come to stop, but I had had enough of it, and yelling for Charlie, who, having deposited them with me,



, STOTS,

had delicately retired, I bid him dive into the barrel of weevil-infested biscuits, and give them some. I then gave them each a piece of coloured cloth and ordered them to begone. The lady with the shaven head made a very hard bid to remain. She had a piccaninnie the size of the one on the wall, and she could nurse and take care of me like the white "slut" (uncomplimentary but familiar term for wife, not meant in any way offensive), but I was implacable, and consoled her by presenting her with an empty long cau de Cologne bottle, and, as the rest of the group showed signs of purloining everything they could lay their hands upon, I bid Charlie unceremoniously hustle them out.



CHAPTER XIII.

VISITORS AND VISITATIONS.

ETURNING strength now made it pleasant to me to potter about in the shade, and the feebleness consequent upon my illness gave a glamour to the inanition of my situation, which softened the feeling of irritability that the circumstances had caused me. At first my favourite walk was down to the beach, near the Custom House, where the crooked flagstaff stood, and where the formidable battery of three guns was mounted—the only one of any use whatever being a small brass cannon of ornamental make with the date marked on

it, "1709." This was the sole defence of Chiloane. Down here was the only cleanly bit of seashore accessible from the island, all the rest being given over to all sorts of filth and refuse; for the African Portuguese, even in authority, have not the very faintest idea of cleanliness or sanitary precaution. Even the Africanda

and Governor's house on this island were not supplied with any pretence, indoor or out, of what the auctioneer and valuator would describe in setting forth the qualifications of a house as "the usual offices." So

all sorts of refuse were thrown indiscriminately on the seashore either to be washed out as far as the coral reefs, there to rot and fester in the sun at low-water time, or to rot and fester all day above high-water mark; in both cases

adding to the poisonous vapours of the unhealthy atmosphere. Indeed, at times, this stench, added to the fœtid vapours from the feculent growths of rank weeds and poisonous mangroves on the mudbanks, will cause a casual visitant violent vomiting, and it is little wonder that a white man making long stay in the place should succumb to the influences of miasma and malaria. To the same reason may, perhaps, be traced the deep apathy into which the Portuguese seem to be helplessly and hopelessly plunged.

Down here would congregate the knot of Banyan traders who occupied the island, and represented what little legitimate commerce came to or went from the place. They were the owners of the few launches or whale-boats that lay slant-

ing on the beach or rode at anchor some little way out in the harbour. For hours these Indians, in their brilliant Oriental costumes, would stand or sit and chat or look solemnly out to sea. What they could find to talk about or what enterprise they could be looking for across the water, it would be hard to say. But there they were, day in, day out, still talking, still gazing seaward. I have heard that some of them were well-to-do, and, in fact,



one young Banyan, I was told, was passing rich, and owned most of the house property on this portion of Chiloane, which, indeed, was the only portion that had anything beyond the Kaffir huts in the swamp land on the island. The little brass cannon at the Government flag-staff was the ordnance which fired the signal of an approaching vessel.

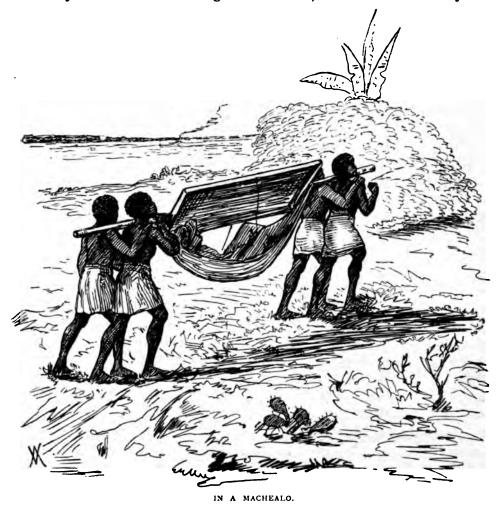
When a ship was expected, a boy would be sent up a tall tree near the extreme point of the island, and for hours watch for its coming. When, from his point of vantage, he sighted a vessel, he would clamber down and report the details of his discovery. Then would the little cannon be made to bark out the information. Should the importance of the arriving vessel steering its way up the outer side of the island warrant it, the Governor and other officials would bestir



themselves, and, lolling in machealos, be carried to the place of landing at the other end of the island. On the occasion of one of these visitations, I procured the aid of some machealo boys and a machine, lent me by the worthy Pinto at Singune, of whose house I was commissioned to make a drawing.

The journey over the swamp land by this method of conveyance was as

pleasant as it was novel. The peculiar, ambling trot which the "boys" keep up, apparently without effort or much fatigue, is rather agreeable, and when you get sufficiently accustomed to the swing of the machine, not to be in momentary fear



of being thrown out on either side, you thoroughly enjoy it. There are four carriers—two front and two behind—and the pleasanter mode of sitting is "with your face to the horses," or, to speak more correctly, to recline facing the direction in which you are going. When the journey is at all uphill, the carriers in front sing to

those behind them, on whose shoulders the weight and burden for the time being is thrown, then vice versā when going downhill, the boys behind take up the refrain while the others do the labour. In any case, they never cease to drone out their songs, and are chorused by the workers in grunts of assent. When they get well into working order and are running under a direct sun, it must be admitted these carriers exhale a decidedly strong odour from their perspiring copper or ebony skins—so strong, indeed, that it becomes necessary to alleviate it by the use of a well-scented handkerchief or the free use of tobacco. Perfumes such as eau de Cologne or lavender water are of mighty service in these out-of-the-way places and unusual situations. There is nothing effeminate in their use either, as the soothing of the olfactory nerves often obviates or averts a fever. I have known an ivory-hunter of twenty years' standing look to his scent-flask with as much care as he did to his cartridge cases.

Along we ambled through the swamp land, the boys taking most eccentric tracks, making, as far as they could, progress through any portion of sandy track where the action of the red ants had turned the course into a pathway as firm and smooth as concrete. We passed some huge hills formed by these extraordinary insects. These hills, when deserted, are of great comfort to a traveller, should he encamp near one, and are used a good deal by the natives for cooking purposes. Being hollow, a chimney is easily knocked through the top. An entrance through the side, and a fire lit within, an admirable baking oven is the result.

It is wonderful how quickly the machealo boys get over the ground without much show of speed or effort, grunting, singing, and swinging—only stopping for a moment to transfer the huge bamboo pole from one shoulder to the other, then on again, singing their interminable impromptus.

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This is a very fine white Bass we have the privilege of carrying,

Um-Um-Yah \ !
He is a great chief in his own country and smokes tobacco worth much gold,

Um-Um-Yah \ !
How happy are we to carry this great one amongst the great white men,

And how glad our hearts will be to him

When he gives to us many shining silver rupees for our trouble.

UM-UM-UM \ ! \ YAH \ ! \ YAH \ ! \ !
Then will we cease to work and drink the sweet Caghu,
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Um-Um-Yah !

And to-night, when the wind is cold, we will sleep with plenty of blankets and wives, $Um-Um-Yah \ !$

And never arise until our stomachs bite us for food and drink, And the beautiful white Bass wants to give us more rupees.

UM-UM-UM! YAH! YAH!!

So on, ad libitum, they draw harmless exaggerated pictures of their good fortune. Happy-go-lucky, they seldom seem to take a gloomy view of anything. Should these joyful songsters suspect you of understanding them, they will fool you to the top of your bent, with songs of praise and adulation; but should they form the opposite opinion, that you are oblivious of their words, you may hear, if you but sufficiently understand their language, chanted criticisms concerning your personality, more scathing and humorous than truthful and complimentary.

The vessel which was signalled, and which was at anchor opposite Singune, when we arrived, was a French steamer, and on board were some Portuguese who were bringing with them a couple of horses as presents for King Güngüanæ from their Government, who, at the time I write of, were most solicitous of the goodwill of this dusky potentate, whom they were diligently plying with quantities of gin and other strong cordials until he was well-nigh demented. Indeed, a very short time after this he entirely broke over the traces.

Having expressed his intention of moving to his summer kraal, the Portuguese delegates, who were injudiciously assuming too openly the position of pastors and masters, as well as bottle-holders, advised him not to do so, throwing out vague and dark hints as to the English and Germans, who were prowling about to do him harm. Here they were hoist on their own petard; the very liquor with which they were plying him, and through the influence of which they hoped to throw him into a lethargic state of pliability, mounted his head, and at the suggestion of interference or menace he became mad. He called to him his brother and chief fighting man, Jokane, and made wrathful questionings of him and his other counsellors.

- " Am I a baby that I should be nursed and taught?"
- "Who is going to hunt? If I am the dog, where is the wolf?"
- "Am I a dog, or am I not a lion?"

With many such questions, to which, as his brother told me, he wanted no answer, he gave the worthy Portuguese emissaries three days' start to get clear of his path, and then ordering Jokane to take out ten thousand of his fighting men,

he made march for his southern kraal, murdering and devastating everything before him for sixteen days.

So much for Portuguese policy of liquor as a vehicle for developing negotiations with a Kaffir King. Their three hundred years of "occupation" has taught them no more than this.

But to return to the horses en route as a gift to Güngüanæ. One of them died during the voyage. The other was in tolerable condition when it arrived at Singune, but when I explain the manner of unshipping it and bringing it as hore, it will not be wondered at that the poor brute never survived to reach the King's kraal, where, doubtless, it would have met with an early death from the fatal Tsetse fly.

The persons who had the care of this surviving animal got into a good large ship's boat. The horse was then slung over the side of the steamer and released in the water. A rope was then attached to it—not to the neck or an ordinary head harness, but to a running noose adroitly slipped over both nostrils and mouth, and thus securely held, the horse was towed, swimming and floundering, something over a quarter of a mile, to the shore, where, released, it tottered up to the dry sand, gasping for breath. Then, standing stock-still for a moment, with open mouth, distended nostrils, and dilated eyes, it began to shake violently, and, with a most piteous scream, fell dead upon the shingle, to the surprise and consternation of those who had brought it thus ashore. I turned away, sick and disgusted at what I had seen, and, as I made my way up to the place, Pinto, I could see, as I glanced back, a group of niggers dancing with glee at the prospect of the unexpected supply of meat-food that had been thus thrown in their way. It would, indeed, be a clever vulture or carrion crow that would get much picking off a dead horse while there were Kaffirs about!

I remained several days at Singune with the worthy exile Pinto, who, as I have elsewhere mentioned, was distinctly the most manly specimen of the Portuguese I had or have met. I found that this part of the island was high and healthy, being well fanned by the fresh breezes from the open sea, where I picked up wonderfully in strength.

During my stay I discovered that the emaciated representatives of the Government, who, in their offices at the Customs, or Africanda, at the other end of the island, seemed scarcely able to hold their heads up over their writing-tables, and who lay listlessly on couches and on the ground during the day, were here to a



AN "IVORY" MERCHANT

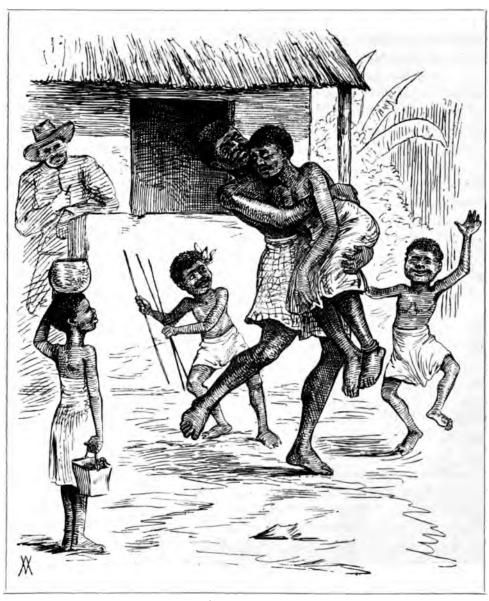
man during the night, eager, wild-eyed gamblers, bending their backs to the work until the early hours of the morning, as though their lives depended upon chance. Perhaps to a great extent their lives do depend upon casts of the die, for I have been informed that the parent Government at Lisbon leaves these wretched outcasts to live on what they can glean from passports and more nefarious forms of commercial enterprise, and then show a surplus.

Returning to my domicile, I found matters much as I had left them, save that the meagre stores were almost finished; however, my picture's merits had spread, and I had some commissions from Banyan traders for what they termed, "photograuve," and, if gaudy colouring may rank as a commendable attribute, some of my portraits and pictures of "stores" ought to take high position. "Penny-plain-tuppence-coloured" style of art would pale its ineffectual fires against the brilliant hues of my most trifling efforts at this period. Like the Irishwoman's new shawl, they were "neither showy nor flashy, but just a bright red and yellow." Nothing else would pay, and in this way I made a few very welcome rupees, which were quite a God-send at the time. As I write, I have upon my finger a silver ring; it is honestly worth half-a-crown. take many half-crowns for it just now, for it represents the proceeds of my first portrait, that of an old Indian trader. I took considerable care with this work. but found it was not appreciated until I had bedaubed it with garish colour. Then it passed muster, and I was rewarded for it by the presentation of this ring, a bundle of Popadum biscuits and a small pot of guava jelly!

I have left quite a number of commissions unfulfilled at Chiloane. Should any enterprising artist, with a strong constitution, reading this, contemplate taking up the connection, I will freely waive all right to my prior claim.

The most interesting of my subjects was the master of an Arab dhow, which glided into the harbour at our end of the island, with the silent snake-like ease that characterises these mysterious boats. He was a splendid brute, and stood with a few small tusks of ivory on his arm, as much as to say, "Behold an honest trader!" I tried hard to induce him to let me visit his ship, but it was of no avail; the most plausible excuses were put forth, and well I knew that in the hold of that ship "ivory" of a different hue from that which he nurses in his portrait—which I give on another page—lay huddled in human shape.

He was very free with his money, however, and a courteous patron, and the authorities treated him with much deference.



CAGHU DRINKER.

I wonder what poll-tax he paid to the representatives of his most Christian Majesty of Portugal—this scoundrel, for the "cargo" I heard clanking down to the shore from the swamp during the night.

I now began to feel more easy in my mind, and to plot some means of getting within reach of a British Consul, if the worst should come to the worst. pleasant to visit Guttling or Hüpfer, and spend a few hours in quiet intercourse with them. At the house of the latter one day I met a lady of whom I had heard much—Mrs. Fels. She and her husband were on their way to Delagoa Bay, having crossed from the mainland, from whence they had come over in a dugout after a long and harassing journey through country that testified to the sad havoc caused by the edict given to Jokane by King Güngünanæ. Mr. Fels was suffering from fever, and did not say much, but his wife was full of fascinating conversation. A well-favoured little woman, this lady was a positive African curiosity, with all the manners and refinement of an Englishwoman. She had been for years wandering with her husband as "an exploiter," a life which had nothing blunted her. She is accredited the best linguist and interpreter amongst a number of tribes, speaking widely different languages. She wore her revolver, slung with as much ease as though it were a chatelaine, and altogether was such an agreeable novelty in our midst that I, for one, regretted the loss of when she and her husband departed.

The next visitors to my island were, much to my surprise, "the merry Swiss boys," who, though melancholy of mien, had nearly recovered from their cruel experiences of fever. They had had quite enough of gold-finding as far as Aruanguae was concerned, and were now returning to "meine Mütter," having disposed of their stores and outfits at a sacrifice. Poor fellows! they were but examples of the many who suffer from the hallucination that the precious metal only awaits the gathering during a salubrious outing. They greatly relieved my mind by news of Heavisides and the others, whom, it would appear, were living in apparent ease, having realized upon the goods we took up in the perilous voyage to Aruanguae, and on which the thoughtful commander had neglected to set an embargo. Heavisides would return shortly, I was told, and I was glad of the information. The Swiss boys left with Mr. and Mrs. Fels.

The spiritual welfare of the Portuguese at Chiloane was (and is, I should surmise) looked after by a little clean-shaved priest, or "padre." This little pillar of Mother Church in this out-of-the-way corner of the vineyard was a per-

son of considerable importance, and busied himself with much more profitable and tangible affairs than the sterile souls of his flock. In short, he was the chief vendor of the horrible concoction, Cachu, and in it did a roaring trade. He was also a money-lender, and in this capacity might very well be looked upon as the chief stay of the gaming-table at Pinto's. It was a sight to see this minister of the Gospel plodding along, book in hand, doubtless deeply immersed in matters not of this world, and apparently oblivious of a wretched husband carrying home his wife, who had managed to procure sufficient cachu to become beastly drunk. Just at this period he was thrown into a state of great business, for news had come that the Bishop, whom I had seen disembark at Inhambane, was daily expected to pay his pastoral visit to his worthy children at Chiloane. The Government House and its approaches burst out into floral decorations and bunting. All sorts and conditions of flags were raked together—all except the English, though Herr Dörrbecker, who had come down, with a fine sense of humour, gravely proffered the loan of his Union Jack. It was refused with much indignation.

However, poor old England was not left altogether out in the cold, for, when the triumphal arch was completed, no fewer than three flags of the Donald Currie line fluttered in the breeze.

Religion was now evidently in the ascendant. The Bishop came, gave his blessing to the grovelling officials, the Capitaes Mores, who, in full uniform, came out to meet him, and positively knelt and kissed the sand at his feet. His stay was discreetly short, and soon after his departure more representatives of the Church arrived. These were two female "missionary teachers," who had been up to Güngünanæ's kraal, to spread the Gospel, and had found such favour with the monarch himself, that both were in a highly interesting condition. Either through the general disruption at his palace, or the wrath of his favourite queen, they were forced to beat a retreat and seek shelter in Chiloane, where, I doubt not, soon after my departure they completed their mutual maternities, under the fostering care and protection of the Governor Verily, with the aid of gin and female "missionary teachers," Portugal ought to work wonders in lightening the darkness of the benighted negro.

At times I had a touch of fever or ague, not to be wondered at, living as I was, and in such a place. The only physical occupation I could get was shooting at some small snipe-like birds and carrion crows—both unfit for food.

A grand sea-hawk used to poise himself for a few moments at a great height over where the fowls and a kid or two were feeding. I often tried, but I never could



hit him. Down by the sea I had some solitary practice with my rifle at a bottle, but the only wild sport I had was one morning when both Bob and Charlie came into my room in a wild state of excitement, and, by pantomime of pointing to my gun and making a wriggling action with the sticks they were armed with, gave me to understand that there was a snake somewhere about. Taking revolvers. I went out at the back, where I found a group of young niggers in great excitement, sticks in hand, at a respectful distance round a small scrubbush, which may be seen growing just behind the kitchen-house in my sketch. This I

approached cautiously, and soon descried the extremity of a large brown, snake lying dormant, its head and upper portion being well nestled in the shrub. He was difficult to get at, so I opened a number of large cartridges, and putting the powder of them on an old biscuit tin cover, I placed it as near the reptile as I could without disturbing it. I then made a train to

it with a sprinkling of powder, and when safely distant from the explosion, blew up the shelter amidst the frantic yells and dancing of the niggers. To my surprise, the snake lay perfectly still, evidently stunned by the concussion. I got my revolver as close to it as I could, and cut it clean in two; the head portion then started in one direction, while the severed tail vigorously wriggled

off in another; but both ends were speedily reduced to a pulp by the sticks of the boys. Where the shrub bush had been we found the *débris* of no fewer than five young snakes. These were also jellified by the weapons of the natives.

This was the wildest sport I had on Chiloane. Once or twice I got out fishing with my neighbour in his dug-out, but the boat was far from a comfortable one. had to get in at one end, and when the broad portion of your body was below the gunwale, which inclined inwards, you had to slide into your position. This gave me a sensation that if the craft heeled over, which felt extremely



likely at the slightest provocation, there would be no extricating yourself. As I also had, to buy a passport for this kind of sport, which at best was very meagre and dull when the novelty was once over, I did not trouble it much.

One morning, while I was lying on my rugs reading, feeling very lax and useless, a shadow came across my threshold, and it was followed by the figure that cast it. The figure was that of a tall, powerful man. He had a fine leoning face, with a clear, kindly eye. Stretching his hand up to the lintel of the door, he leaned his head upon his arm, and, gazing at me for some moments, he at

length said slowly, "Upon my word, this is a nice condition to find an English gentleman in; how are you, Mackay?"



This was Reuben Benningfield, elephant hunter, all-round good sportsman, "Baba Inkos" (Father of Chiefs) amongst the Kaffirs, and a thorough good fellow.

He came in, sat down in the sacred arm-chair, and heard my history with much show of annoyance and impatience at the treatment I had received, and then, like a good practical Samaritan, he said, "Is there anything you would fancy; would you like some tins of cocoa and milk?" Would I like nectar of the gods? would I like this, that, and the other, until my head swam with the prospect of the good things that this friend, whom I had seen but once before, was about to lavish upon me? Presently he rose, and bid me adieu, saying that he would expect me to breakfast next morning, and that he was going to set sail before sunset. "Lloyd and I are going up-country," he said, "and have put in here to try and get some more boys. We have only eighty all told, and I would like a round hundred for the journey."

"Great Scott!" I ejaculated, "and our captain wanted seven of us to prospect with one apiece!" He threw back his head and spread his great chest, and gave forth such a laugh as has seldom roused the echoes of a slave hut, and I could hear him laughing as he strode across the sand.

Before long a string of niggers came in bearing the good things Benningfield had insisted on sending me.

I will confess it, that when I looked on the gay labels of the various delicacies ranged before me, so generously given to me in the midst of my poverty, want, and anxiety, it gave me such a vivid impression of my own weakness and helplessness that tears of gratitude coursed down my cheeks and gave me much relief.



CHAPTER XIV.

THE ADVENT OF JOKANE.

EXT morning an emissary from the hut of Reuben Benningfield came to bid me to breakfast and guide me thither. It was one of the large circular Kaffir houses of the place, with a tall spiral roof of thatch which, not having a ceiling like the Fortuguese slave-house we occupied, gave the interior a very dim, weird appearance.

Breakfast was set in a bright little corner room looking out through a doorway into a fenced [place, which, I suppose, did service for a garden. Benningfield and his companion Lloyd were busying themselves with their belongings, apparently uppermost in their attentions being the examination of arms and ammunition. Huge elephant guns that looked as though they had done good service, leant against the wall, while regulation boxes of cartridges were heaped upon the ground.

On my arrival, we squatted on some cases—for the place was devoid of furniture—and, with a large, low packing case for a table, we discussed a most excellent breakfast of curry and fresh

coffee, good fresh-made bread, and spring onions, followed by the ambrosial pipe.

It was a delightful symposium, and once again I began to consider life

worth living, even in Chiloane. There was much pleasant converse, as might be expected from two gentlemen of refinement, such as my hosts were—especially on the part of Benningfield, with his twenty years of hunting experience in quest of the wily elephant.

I learnt much that would serve one in good stead up-country, and which I have carefully stored should fate and fortune ever place me in need of it. While we thus sat over our morning meal, there came in one of the Banyan traders who was dealing with my host for some huge tusks of ivory which he had brought down with him—presents from King Güngünanae, with whom, as with that potentate's father, Umzela, before him, he was a great favourite. The sedate Indian, in his spotless white garments and brilliant crimson silk head-gear, solemnly deposited his umbrella against the door-post, squatted, and, opening a silken kerchief, commenced gravely to count out his wealth. This done, and repeated by the ivory hunter, the Oriental arose, and, with much impressive salaaming, withdrew, I warrant me having much the best of the bargain.

Just then a most unusual noise and commotion was heard, and as we went out into the garden place we could see, through the palings, the natives running in one direction in great excitement. Then came a long cavalcade of armed Kaffirs, with much blowing of horns and beating of tom-toms. In their midst was a sort of closed machealo, or palanquin it might almost be designated, followed by the pieces of an iron bedstead and some half-dozen huge cooking pots about the size and shape of a 36-gallon ale cask.

We sallied forth to see what it could all mean, and when we got down to where they had halted, opposite a Portuguese house, Benningfield, who recognised some of the warriors as Güngünanae's fighting men, with some trouble eventually elicited the truth. First, the braves that he interviewed had forgotten the name of the personage they were escorting. Another had not heard his name—and so on. However, it was eventually discovered that it was none other than the King's brother, Jokane, chief fighting-man of the tribe, who having finished the devastation before mentioned, was now, under courteous escort of the Portuguese, making progress through their territory to Inhambane, from which point he purposed striking inland to join the royal retinue and report his successes to the King at his summer kraal. The women and children were in a high state of excitement and ferment at this incursion of the military, much as one finds it happen in a quiet corner of England when a crack regiment passes

through or makes a short sojourn—only with more demonstrative action of delight on the part of the fair sex than we find in civilization.

In the course of an hour the cavalcade of wild-looking warriors formed again and again, the blaring of the trumpets and the beat of the tom-toms was resumed as the chief was borne to the Governor's house, where, having entered, the bodyguard, some hundred in number, squatted on the roadway under the shelter of the trees. A most forbidding-looking band they were, with their war-gear. They were of all sizes, from short thick-set, to tall gaunt men, but all of undoubted muscular power. There they sat, hour after hour. Benningfield found much difficulty in procuring his passports in time to catch the tide with his launch, so entirely absorbed in their visitor were the officials. He did procure them, however, and just as the sun was going down his launch bounded from her mooring-place, and I waved him an adieu from the beach as he plunged and ploughed along his course. Returning from the seashore, I picked my way through the still patient, crouching warriors outside the Governor's, and then, pausing at a convenient point of vantage, fell to studying them and their curious belongings. Before I had been long occupied in this pursuit, they were called to "attention," to which they sprang with alacrity, and formed into a well-ordered line in a surprisingly quick time. Then began the music again. Then emerged the great fighting-man ,—this time accompanied by an obsequious Portuguese official, and followed by four Kaffirs, bearing on their shoulders a long bamboo machealo pole, from which were dangling half-a-dozen huge "square-faced" bottles of Hollands gin-a slight mark of hospitality on the part of the Governor to his distinguished visitor!

The ordinary night-jabbering, singing, and talking were considerably increased, you may be sure, by the arrival of these "warriors bold" upon the island, and many a humble fisherman's heart was made sore by the encroachments of the brilliant body-guard of Jokane upon the susceptibilities of the female portion of his household. Even Charlie and Bob were demoralized by the excitement of the event, and began to develop wonderful martial ardour, brandishing fighting-sticks in a manner that had to be quickly and severely curbed. Jokane's prowess in the field was little more than a miserable march of massacre, but so dear to the heart of the native African is anything in the shape of bloodshed or connected therewith that even the meanest of these fighting-men was looked upon as a hero.

This military occupation was to last until the arrival of a coasting steamer by which the chief would proceed to Inhambane, and his men make their way there to meet him on foot along the mainland. Like most men of arms in the piping time of peace, they had rather more time on their hands than was good for themselves or anyone else. They had "loot" and negotiable articles with them, which went mostly in the purchase of cachu, and must have gladdened the heart of the little priest, albeit the strain on his stock of that nauseous liquor must have been considerable on the sudden influx of customers. However, I suppose his Bishop would not trouble him again with a visitation for another year or two, and he had little else to do but to foster, encourage, and increase the liquor traffic. The place became irksome with the increase of noise and tumult, for the Portuguese were holding a candle to the devil in the matter of entertaining Jokane, and his men had just what latitude they liked short of open murder—a state of affairs that well-nigh demoralized the whole island in a very few days, and would, indeed, eventually have quite done so had it not been that this barbarian commander was a more strict disciplinarian than the civilized rulers of the island, and kept a pretty firm hand upon his forces. A hundred men with nothing much to do make a great difference in the daily course of events in a small settlement; and these Kaffir fighting-men seemed to pervade everywhere. Your hut was not safe from their harmless, but inconvenient, not to say unpleasant, intrusion. One spot, and one alone, was free of them: that was a corner of the island down by the seaside, belted by mangroves, and, inland, fringed with cactus and thick-set cachu and gum trees. This was the Kaffir burial-ground, the place of the dead. It was a curious, fascinating, silent waste; quite unmolested, quite undisturbed.

Here I spent many hours in the shade of the luxurious growths that overhung the graves of the quiet dead, or wandered along the stretch of sand above water-mark where the fishermen lay buried, their upturned boats smashed beyond further use, with the implements and utensils they last used, also broken up, heaped upon their burial mounds, taking the place of the monumental marbles of more civilized races past and present. This portion of the island was quite undefiled, and, it would seem, sacred.

Each grave, with its broken records of the life pursued by the body that lay beneath, offered a strange, weird subject for speculation and thought. I visited the place one moonlight night and found it for the first time inhabited by anything animated save myself and the passing birds. My rival was a wretched dog jackal.

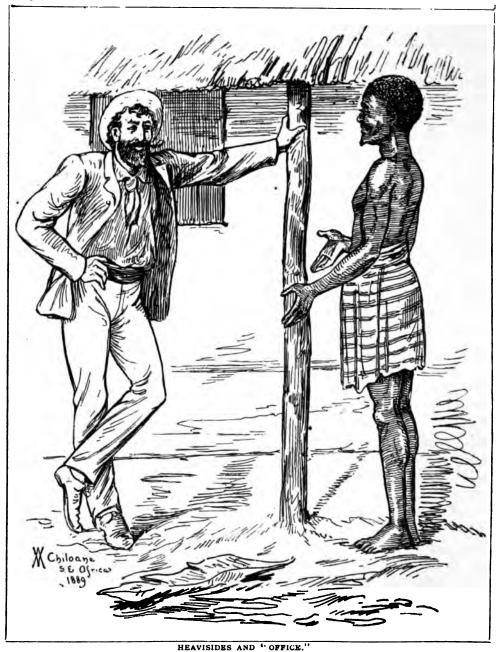




and he was on no such romantic or sentimental mission as directed my visit. He was making a futile attempt at body-snatching, the which intent I frustrated with the knob of my long Kaffir stick, being unwishful to waken the echoes of the place with any more noisy weapon. It was sufficient to send him howling into the shadows of the thicket, and I was left alone to contemplate the shallow graves, with here and there phosphorescent lights gleaming over them in dark places like dim funereal candles. There and then I ruminated upon my position, and thought, what if I should succumb to the horrors of this poisoned island; would it not be better to lie buried among these untutored savages than to be tossed into the tide or to the vultures by the civilized lords of the soil? And there and then I chose me out a tree, and, with my hunting knife, I slashed deep into its bark my initials. In the morning my sentiment still held me to my purpose to the extent of bringing Charlie to the place and explaining to him my wishes. Much to my surprise, he not only understood my desire, but treated it with a gravity and deference that gratified me much. The clean-souled purity of the benighted savage shone out of its darkness before me—a rare contrast to the festering, brutal immorality that surrounded it on this small space, and in every form of mental and physical vice to which human nature can be degraded, reared itself here, under the Portuguese standard and the title of civilization. This may seem mawkish sentiment, but malaria touches a man strangely; and there is my tree, though my nearest approach to utilizing it has been to sit under its shade.

I remember once visiting an American commercial king at his country seat in the Mohawk valley. When we were driving over his extensive cultivated estate, he stopped at a beautiful white marble mausoleum, and, opening the carved iron doorway, he said, "This will be my last resting-place," and, entering it, there, sure enough, under a beautiful stained-glass window, was carved his name, the date of his birth, and the word "died," with a blank left for the day. As we left, he said, in an explanatory way, "You see, when the end comes it's as well to know that you are going to be well housed." After all, there was something practically comforting in this arrangement.

In a few days came down a whale-boat from Aruanguae, and in it—the gods give us joy!—Heavisides and Office. The greeting was a cordial one, you may be sure; and, over evening pipes, as we had done before—it now seemed ages ago—we talked of experiences and prospects. I learnt of the doings of the doctor and lieutenant, and it would appear our fears as to their welfare were



anxieties thrown away, for they had obtained credit, and were faring comparalively sumptuously every day.

Heavisides, good soul, had taken the first opportunity to come back and look after me, and as there was only room for one in the boat he availed himself of it, and left the others to follow after with their belongings. I told him of the advent of Jokane, a matter he was mightily interested in. "For," said he, "I know the old fellow so well, and he may be valuable to us in getting up-country should we be allowed to try it instead of rotting in this hole."

Next morning he sent Office with a message to the chief, and, as he elected to await the answer lying in his blankets, being fagged with the weary journey, I wandered out to sketch.

About midday I returned, and entering the gloomy hut, out of the glaring sun, the only object I could descry was an elderly shrivelled Kaffir sitting in the sacred only chair of our establishment. once jumping to the conclusion that it was one of the intruders who had been unpleasantly familiar in their visits occasionally. caught the ancient negro by the arms, and, with some vigour and uncomplimentary ejaculations, proceeded to drag him out, when the thundering voice of Heavisides called to me from the dark X and obscure corner of the



room, "Drop him, Mac! for Heaven's sake, drop him! it is Jokane, the king's fighting-man!"

I dropped him.

And, hurrying into the sleeping-room, I procured my handsomest pipe, and, filling it, returned, and presented it to him with much ceremony. Meantime, Heavisides had adroitly explained to him that I was a funny dog, and that such was my rough but harmless mode of welcoming a guest. Fortunately, the old



JOKANE AND HIS "HOSTAGE."

cut-throat entered into the fun of the thing, and laughed consumedly, which was just as well, for I found that he had a guard of four stalwart fighting-men hanging about the hut. Had he taken a different view of my treatment, matters might have been uncomfortable in that island home, and most assuredly we English would have got no protection from the Portuguese. Now, however, we fell to most pleasant converse, he smoking my pipe and I suffering the most excruciating agony from having had to take his proffered snuff.

I asked him, through Heavisides, how he would have resented a pulling about such as I had given him if it were done in earnest. This, I found, was another inadvertence, for he commenced to unroll the skin wrapping of the blade of his assegai. While he was thus engaged, Heavisides counselled me to stand firm against the wall, and on no

account to flinch, for though he might go uncomfortably near me, he would not touch me with the weapon. I did as I was bidden, and a very

uncomfortable five minutes it was, as, after "bucking" himself some feet in the air, he lit opposite to where I was posted against the wall, and played the keen blade like a flash of lightning alarmingly near my face and lower anatomy. This at an end, he caught me by the ankles and shook them, then caught me by the arms and shook them, then clapping me approvingly on the back, he turned to Heavisides and said something which my friend informed me was to the effect that I was no coward and would make a good fighting-man, only I was the wrong colour.

If that old warrior had only known my private feelings and how relieved I was when his hideous pantomime was ended, and how glad I was when he took his departure, he would have formed a very different opinion of my chances as a "brave."

One day, during the absence of Heavisides, whom Jokane seemed very fond of, and whom he called "Our White Chief," he came again, accompanied by a "wife," who, as he explained, was a hostage he intended presenting to his brother—poor child — of some twelve years, her head was shaved as a sign of mourning — perhaps she was the only vestige left of some minor tribe. Much laughter and pantomimic imitation of my former indiscretion was performed by the chief in pulling me out of the chair Then I coveted his assegai, the which I occupied on his entrance. blade of which was as sharp as a razor, but he would not part with it, explaining that the notches cut on the shaft marked the number of men he had killed with it, and which he must show to the king. He, however, showed his goodwill by offering to give me another, and if I would accompany him, show me where I could "make plenty of blood" with it. Now came my opportunity. I had by me my Masonic apron-case containing my apron and some little treasures, such as photographs and prized letters. I displayed to him the badge of brotherhood, and as well as I could explain its import, telling him that blood was not of its kind. He was much interested with the demonstration, and it was with much difficulty I saved the apron from confiscation for his personal adornment. But this I succeeded by offering it in exchange for his assegai with its deadly record, and explaining that if he wore it he dare not kill a brother.

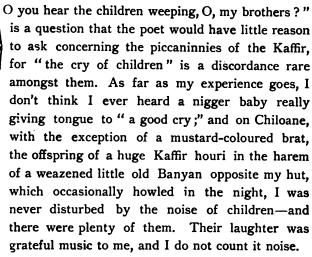
When I last saw him he gave me a warm invitation to come to his brother's kraal and find him, and enjoined me to bring the apron with me.

The moral—if there be any—in this little record of a strange meeting in a strange place is, should any worthy Mason contemplate prospecting in the auriferous regions under the rule of Güngünanæ—let him carry a light kit, a heavy pocket, and bring his apron with him.



CHAPTER XV.

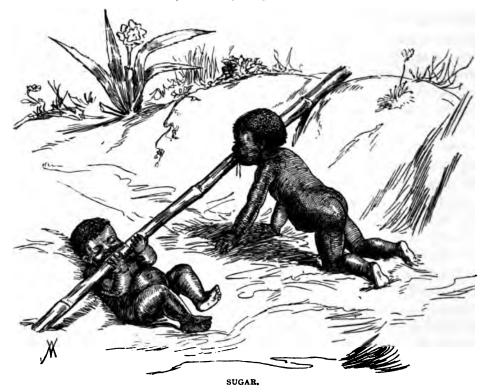
CHILD LIFE AT CHILOANE.



These children of the Ethiopian present a most interesting study from the very first, when one sees them hanging on the back of the mother, straddled across her ample hips until they develop into manhood or womanhood, which they do with surprising rapidity. Brighteyed and quick of wit, these morsels of black humanity are well-cared for and nurtured by their mothers when young and helpless. Though motherhood is not an estate that any Kaffir woman

would seek by choice, fully recognizing the inconvenience of it in her avocations, still when she is blest with offspring she is a good and mindful mother until her bantling is able to run alone, which it elects to do very soon after it has a separate existence. Up to the time of toddling about, it is continually with its mother, being

lashed across her hips, back or front, according to the requirements of her movements, and there it contentedly straddles with less noise or commotion than an unfledged crow in a nest. When the infants are put upon the ground they immediately begin to stretch themselves for movement and action like kittens. During the nursing period the children are everywhere the mother is—being attached to her person at the well, or when carrying burdens of any kind on her head, or when pounding at the mealie tub. The infant is always with her, and to it she is constantly crooning songs, until it begins to croon in response-



Slung on her back, it gains its first experiences of the world and its initial bakings of the sun. In the sun it will loll, wide-eyed and awake, or droop its head in sleep. It will munch its fists when nourishment is not forthcoming, and when it is, will drink to repletion, and then droop its head and sleep again. Crying is a luxury it does not indulge in, and in this it certainly asserts a superiority over its white

kindred of pampered cultivation. This may be a virtue for which it perhaps does not deserve much personal credit, being the result of the absolutely healthy circumstances of its birth and existence.

The next stage in its existence is a highly amusing one, when it is left, like a tadpole, with very little arms or legs and a great deal of stomach, to shift for itself for hours on some shaded sand heap. It is a sight to witness two or three of these little creatures in a sandhole under some trees, where the mothers have left them for a time as in a crêche. Here you may see them rolling and tumbling about like huge copper-coloured beetles (the babies of whatever tribe are never very black), unless perchance they have the luck to be left with the soothing company of a piece of green sugar-cane, when they will hang on it, sucking and chewing until they tumble off with repletion and sleep. This process of nourishment tends to fatten and strengthen them, and to cut their gums for teething.

The period after this is when they begin to feel their feet and tumble about in their efforts to walk. They have now been promoted to the indulgence of feeding on mealie pap, which nutriment is at first administered by the mother masticating the already boiled corn in her mouth and then transferring it to that of her infant. Don't be disgusted. I have seen a well-born lady in England doing the same with a sponge-cake, and both she and the baby enjoying the process amazingly. After these initiatory lessons in feeding, the youngsters are generally allowed to scrape the pot, or, like Jack Sprat and his wife, to

Lick the platter clean,

a process they would continue to the point of bursting if they were permitted. The mealies swelling in their little insides give them such a rotundity that they will roll about unable to stand until the process of digestion has well set in. At this period, being unhampered with them to the extent of not having to carry them about constantly, the mothers will take a great pride in them, and it is a common thing to see these naked mites decorated with bangles on arms and legs, and elaborate necklets of beads and copper. My next door neighbour, the young lady I have already depicted as being wooed with the "cupboard love" of a handful of sugar, was thus bedecked on both ankles and on the left arm. She also had a brilliant necklace, and, what was very unusual in one so young, an elaborate little

apron. This latter may have been added to the customary airy nothingness of childhood's garb on account of the contiguity of the vulgar white visitors.

I have often watched, from the shadow of my room, this piccaninnie with her brothers and sisters—the eldest a girl of some nine years—demolishing, by the assistance of the cats, a dish of soft boiled mealies. The children would feed and drink and lick up the creamy pulp until they were gorged, and then lie basking in the sun, unable to move the surplus mush that had run down upon them, drying in the heat, and giving them—especially my friend, the youngest, who would get well besmeared—the appearance of having been white-washed. The eldest, who even at her early age had a most elegant feminine figure—perhaps better than it would be in nine years more of development—and who was altogether a well-favoured young Swahili, would take her siesta, leaning her head against the wall of the hut, and her limbs listlessly stretched out, with the air of a juvenile Cleopatra who had supped to repletion on all the gorgeous luxuries of an imperial banquet.

I do not mean to give the impression that this young damsel, or the many like her on the island and elsewhere, are confirmed "gorgibusters," to borrow an old school phrase; but young and old, the Kaffirs will feed till they can feed no more; though it is wonderful how soon they will recover themselves and show signs of activity. At the age in question, girls are helping their mothers in the household and other duties of domestic life. You will find them sifting the mealies as they are pounded, drawing and carrying water in gourds and pots from the well, bearing considerable weights upon their little heads. They will busy themselves washing—a most destructive process, attained by whipping a large stone with the wet material to be cleansed. They will also look after the poultry or herd the solitary goat, and will be found busily occupied in learning mysteries of the important art of bead-work in which the women so excel. Girl children of this age with us in colder climates are generally found deeply engaged in the nursing and dressing of dolls. The same instinctive spirit is evinced in the feminine breast of the embryo Kaffir mother, but in a somewhat more practical form. From the age of ten to that of twelve, when she is frequently bidden in marriage, she may be seen going about her avocations with a large round-headed pumpkin tied on her back, just as the women carry their children. and she will talk and sing back to it much the same as she will later on to her animated burden.

The male offspring of the Kaffir, in the period from his first experience of daylight until he enters on his teens, is an untamed piece of electricity. He is a warrior born, and a warrior he will be bred up, no matter what his more peaceful avocations in life may be. At the age of fourteen,

"Iron-jointed, supple-sinew'd they shall dive and they shall run, Catch the wild-goat by the hair and hurl their lances in the sun."

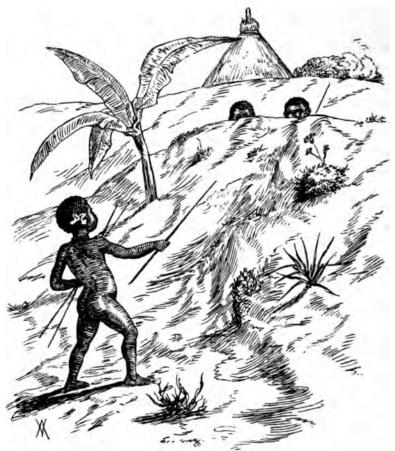
The goats in Chiloane are not very wild, but they will be caught by the hair all the same by the rising generation of boy braves. As to hurling their lances in

the sun, from the time they are able to move about on their legs they may be seen with their regulation three toy fighting-sticks—one for hand-to-hand combat, two for throwing—dancing on sand heaps, plunging into sand holes, and going through all sorts of mimic war manœuvres like a parcel of demented pixies. Every boy is an Ishmael in a small and harmless way, and, if two boys meet, no matter how friendly—and there seems to be much childish affection amongst them—a little playful fighting is the proper form of salutation.

When these youngsters meet in organized bands, much as English schoolboys gather at football, or in the cricket-field to pit their prowess against each other, the men will watch them with the keenest interest, and direct their onslaught and tactics, while the women and maidens will look on with admiration and ejaculations of

applause. It is a matter of envy to a poor white humanity toiling along through the sand, in the garb of civilization, to watch these naked, lithe,

bronze little images dancing, jumping, and running, every muscle and nerve working, without the slightest effort, in the hot sunlight. After this demonstration both sides will gather and imitate a vigorous war dance, with as much movement and evolution as if no exertion had been indulged in beforehand.



PLAYING AT WAR.

Although the Kaffirs settled on Chiloane are mostly dependent on fishing for their livelihood, there is little opportunity for the practice of swimming open to the youngsters. There is no such thing as a stream in the place; the seawater is shallow, and, as I have mentioned, filthy on its coast-line, while out where a plunge might be taken the ominous fin of a shark is too frequently

noticeable to make the attempt desirable from a dug-out. The boy children, therefore, content themselves by shaping toy boats—not after the model of their parents' dug-outs, but in imitation of the whale-boats of the traders—and very ingenious they are in making these, with mast and sail complete. A smooth tract of soft sand serves them for a sea, and on this they will have boat-races with as much interest and excitement as any toy regatta that may take place in the ponds at Hampstead or on the Serpentine.

The children I came across in Chiloane have many other games of a quiet nature, and, I doubt not, of some skill, which are played for the most part with round pebbles or shells. I have often been walking across a silent and apparently deserted sandy track, when, coming suddenly upon a gulley, I have been startled by a swarm of these black imps scampering out of it in all directions at my approach. There they have been quietly and intently playing at some of these games, when my approach has disturbed them.

Their musical acquirements are very limited, but they are very fond of music, and a boy will never be without an instrument of some sort to accompany his idea of song. The most popular—which he makes himself—is a sort of mouth violin. It is formed of a slender bamboo stick, with a small hollow calabash fixed about a third from one end. Across this is tightly strained from one extremity to the other a single cord made of dried, twisted gut. He places his mouth upon the longer end, holding the string with his teeth, then, singing, he will beat on it in the middle with a piece of stick, and the vibration will produce a semblance of harmony, though much of it is likely to become monotonous, as their vocalization is limited, to say the least.

I have introduced this interlude concerning child life because I am fond of children, white or black, and they were a pleasant distraction to me at my place of exile. The native children are quick and intelligent. Religion they have none beyond believing in witches and bogies—nor are they likely to gain much at the hands of such pastors and masters as the Portuguese. I have often thought that if I were in any way connected with missionary enterprise in East Africa, or if the dissemination of the Gospel happened to be my peculiar province amongst these benighted beings, I would turn my earnest attention to the welfare of

"The young, young children, O my brothers!"

And on the clean slates of their little black souls make the white marks of the

lessons I was entrusted to teach, only troubling the older and more hardened bird to the extent of cajoling them to let me deal with the fledglings in little group at their home places, and not at organized schools, where, sorrowful to relate, is a crowd they too often learn to be liars and thieves more readily than innocen Christians.



CHAPTER XVI.

REUNION.

the previous month of waiting for relief. We had so far developed schemes and determined on them that it was mutually arranged that my companion, with Office, and, if possible, an extra boy, was to shortly get on to the mainland and force a march to some English settlement where our positions could be explained

EAVISIDES and I had settled down into the

and relief procured should we receive no tidings of our worthy commander. It was not a pleasant prospect, but we were quite tired of the fool's game that we were forced to play; and Heavisides, who had suffered an attack of fever, was fretting and fuming for the want of action.

A whaleboat arrived from Aruanguae bringing Dr. Roberts and Lieutenant Sugden.

This was something towards concentration, and there was something reassuring in the fact that, even in our awkward plight, union was strength. Both my comrades had evidently suffered a good deal, and during the short time we

had been separated they seemed much worn and changed. Sugden, from rheumatism in the legs, brought on by damp and exposure, was unable to walk, and the doctor had met with an accident to his foot that made him lame. We were glad to meet and chat over experiences, which, however rough and distasteful at their time of occurrence, could always present a humorous side for conversation, which caused us a good deal of merriment.

Upon comparing notes, I came to the conclusion that the Portuguese authorities encountered by the sojourners were of a more amenable and courteous description than those of Chiloane. It may have been that my friends, having goods and chattels in their possession, were looked upon as men of substance, a circumstance that would certainly find weight with the wretched officials who seemed to be left to live more on credit or by their wits than by any assistance they received from the home Government at Lisbon.

The life we now led was much the same reiteration of how we were to live; but perhaps, not with such hopeless helplessness as formerly, for the new comers had a few shekels with them that assumed the proportions of positive wealth in my eyes, now so used to prizing the few miserable reis or occasional rupee or two that came into my hands. The Governor had killed a bullock, and, doubtless, smelling money amongst us, included us in his list of customers. A messenger, therefore, came round with a long official-looking paper, on which was enumerated the various portions of "the flesh of Beef," as it was termed, and their respective prices marked opposite them in reis—that irritating coinage mounting to formidable figures, when a mere trifle of a more sensible form of money would be quoted or calculated.

The Portuguese coinage in use in these colonies is a disgrace to any country. The twenty and forty-reis pieces, if not of all shapes, are of sufficiently various sizes to be most misleading and bewildering, and to have to carry a quantity of them, counting about ninety to sixpence, is an irksome burden, for some representing only twenty reis are a lump of copper equal in size to the five shilling piece, or "cart-wheel," of our mintage.* Again, you will be calculating these precious coppers, the figuring on which has long ago been worn out, and

^{*} The Portuguese mitreis (1,000 reis) is equivalent to the dollar, and is worth 45. 51d. English.

you find, by close examination, that you are robbing yourself by paying away as of less value than the lumbering twenty-reis piece a miserable little coin, also copper, worth, perhaps, three or four times as much. The negroes are very shrewd and sharp with regard to the value of money, and, above all things, they like to deal in English gold. To a Kaffir chief of substance, the English sovereign is, as he describes it, "his good horse"; so with the half-sovereign, it is his "good dog." The Kaffir has never forgotten the lesson taught him by a shrewd Scotchman, the result of which is that the proffering of an English florin to the wily African is to get yourself into disfavour, and under a ban of suspicion that will travel with you or before you wherever you may go in that vast country amongst the natives. The two-shilling piece is known as the "Scotchman's half-crown." The canny chiel referred to took the opportunity of a new issue of florins from the Mint to provide himself with an enormous quantity of them, and trade with them to the then unsuspecting savage as a new coinage of the popular two-and-sixpence of our money. He made his illicit profit, and had cleared out before the trick was discovered. In many instances he found a ready market, the trading natives willingly giving up their stock of worn and battered silver with usurious interest for these bright new coins—of sixpence less sterling value. Many of these coins will be found amongst the body decorations of the Kaffirs, being deemed quite useless by them, an impression they have so firmly fixed that no amount of argument or explanation will convince them, and will only, most likely, bring you under severer suspicion than hangs to the memory of the Scotch gentleman of sharp practice.

The "Maria Theresa" is another cheerful Portuguese coin of currency. As in use in South-East Africa, it is a ponderous silver piece, and would be obsolete had it not a cavity bored in it and filled with a small quantity of new metal on which is stamped a Government mark. Even this it has been found by some to be worth while to pick out and to replace with spurious alloy, so that you are always subject to bother and inconvenience in the exchange of this money, as well as with the copper. I do not know why I should break out into a dissertation upon money, for at the period I am writing about I was not heavily burdened with that useful commodity. Perhaps poverty makes you peculiarly alive to the virtues and faults of the root of all evil. My position at the time when I must have taken note of these things now reminds me of the miserable little man in Hogarth's picture of the debtor's prison, out of whose pocket is protruding a

voluminous manuscript, upon which the title is visible, "A scheme whereby to pay the National Debt."

One morning, as we sat together over our frugal breakfast, the little brace of ordnance barked out the signal that a steamer was sighted, and Heavisides and I repaired to the store of Guttling, where we learnt that the "Courland," of the Castle Line—of which that estimable gentleman was the agent, and still is, I hope, for the sake of those who may happen to have to land at or embark from Chiloane was on its way up to Singune. This news naturally roused us to a state of speculation as to what the arrival of the steamer might imply for us. I was now again in pretty good condition, and so elected to go across the swamp with Heavisides and see the landing, and hear first-hand what might be in store for ns. It was a pleasant walk, the morning being fresh, and the atmosphere, though cleared of its poisonous mists, not yet burnt up by the scorching sun. The steamer was at anchor on our arrival at the Point Singune, and the officials, whom we had seen passing over the swampland in their machealos, were gathered at a house near the flagstaff, where the Portuguese standard was now making one of its occasional flutterings to proclaim to the visiting ship the power in occupation. The usual delays were, of course, observed, and we waited many hours at Pinto's before intending visitors could get to the ship or passengers land. Heavisides put off in Guttling's boat, but I elected to remain comfortably at Pinto's house touching up the picture I had made of his place until such time as he should return.

It was getting well on towards evening when he did return, and I had betaken myself to a lounge, where I was enjoying a very comfortable sleep. The very sight of anything soft and pliable on which to stretch was irresistible to me as a big bank-note to a threadbare thief, so I had succumbed to the attraction, and, as a result, I was in a half-waking kind of dreamland. Passing events and thoughts were weaving themselves in with the fantastic creations of the stuff that dreams are made of. We were all together again, and preparing for a forced march up-country. Again we were in an impossible boat, trying to plough through sand and occasionally getting out to lighten her and swim in brackish water. It was all done with much effort, but the effort neither seemed to fatigue nor exhaust us.

Whatever we did or said, was wrong, according to Captain Limejuice, who was what Heavisides described as "in full blast." I could hear his voice most distinctly, but could not exactly make out what he was saying. Stretching for-

ward to better catch his words, I awoke to find him standing in reality by the side of the couch I was resting upon.

He had come up by the "Courland," and was now indulging in some facetiæ to Senhor Pinto concerning me. The courteous host smiled and nodded assent, though he did not understand a word, notwithstanding that Limejuice was one of those who labour under the pleasing fallacy that if you talk to a foreigner in broken English with a very loud tone of voice, he is bound to understand everything you say.

We spent that night at Pinto's and listened, Heavisides and I, wide-eyed to the wonderful fairy tales that our commander had to tell us of the sums of money which he had sent for our relief, and which must have miscarried. The narration was quite fascinating, and soon sent us to sleep as we lolled upon the settees in the spacious general room, where we slumbered not-withstanding the undertoned chatter of the gentlemen at the gaming-table. I went out into the fresh morning air, that seemed so very different from the atmosphere at the lower end of the island. The "Courland" was getting up steam, and by eight o'clock she weighed anchor and sailed away for Mozambique.

It now appeared that on the return of this boat in a few days we were to be ready to go on board and start on our return journey for England, and not unwelcome news was this same. The commander of our expedition had brought a friend up with him, who, fortunately, was to his liking, and occupied most of his time, so that beyond the arrogant display, every now and then, before us of an ammunition belt full of money we suffered little from his reappearance amongst us.

I will not trouble the reader with any of the details of these days of waiting for the returning steamer; it would be neither instructive nor entertaining sufficient to say, that everyone, including the Kaffir boys, was greatly elated at a change from the weariness of this place.

Packing up was soon completed, and, like a disbanded brigade, looking, I fancy, something like that of Falstaff—our arms were taken from us and stored, for some wise purpose, with other goods upon the island, as indeed were the surgical instruments of Dr. Roberts, and the chronometer and scientific instruments of Lieutenant Sugden.

Overtures were made to me to disgorge my sketch-books and notes, a process that I gently, but firmly, declined to perform, pointing out at the same

time that they were as good as useless to anyone but myself, as my initial pictorial records were of a shorthand nature—only decipherable to myself.

Everything was now in readiness for a start, and the evening at last arrived, when the steamer was signalled at Singune as having arrived from Mozambique.



We were not the only passengers who were about to depart from Chiloane by her. Jokane and his child-wife were, as guests of the Portuguese Government, to travel by the "Courland" as far as Inhambane, and, in view of meeting him there, his commanding chiefs and fighting-men had crossed to the mainland some days before.

In the early morning I visited some spots adjacent to the hut in which I had spent so many days of agony and anxiety, with a peculiar interest. Places that I had never expected to leave again, places that I was now gazing upon for the

last time. I called and bade farewell to my friend Hüpfer, who was sadly harassed by fever at the time, to a few kindly natives I had made friends with, and to some groups of dusky brats, for whom I had purloined some of the last of the sugar store, and who had begun to look upon me, if not as a friend and companion, at least as a harmless curiosity, especially sent amongst them for their amusement and entertainment. On my return to the hut, which for weeks I had chosen to look upon as my prison—and it was little better—I found that the commander with his friend had gone on to Singune by road, leaving us to bring round the baggage by boat. My passport was here awaiting me, for Heavisides knowing the habits and customs of the Portuguese officials, had judiciously insisted upon its being bespoken over night. I looked upon my order of release with its long green stamp and straggling signatures, and waved it in the wind as a prisoner might a reprieve.

CHAPTER XVII.

ADIEU TO EXILE.

UR departure from the island of Chiloane was as ludicrous as it was hazardous and First of all, Lieutenant uncomfortable. Sugden—whose good spirits seemed the only portion of his composition that had not been affected by the outrageous treatment and neglect he had been subjected to, and was now perfectly helpless in the matter of pedestrianism-had to be got to the boat in which we were to make our journey to the steamer. The path to the shore was a tortuous, heavy sand track, and it was out of the question that a nigger, or even a couple of them, could carry him thither without mishap or personal agony to him. necessity is the mother of invention, two poles were soon torn from the high fencing running by the side of the hut, and, being lashed under the seat of the sacred chair which had played such a PERSONAL APPEARANCE AFTER ILLNESS. prominent part in my introduc-

tion to Jokane, a sort of rude "sedan" was constructed, which could easily be carried by four niggers, one at each end of the various poles. Into this the gallant lieutenant was assisted, and cheerily announced that he was ready for the march. Now Kaffirs are in the habit of hoisting weights to the

level of their heads, as that is the usual place for conveying anything they have to carry. Machealo boys would probably have got the poles on to their shoulders, but the unsophisticated geniuses that had the care and conveyance of our helpless friend no sooner got the order to start than they simultaneously hoisted the chair not only up to the level of their heads, but high above them at arm's length, and started with an ambling gait towards the shore, through the deep and uneven sand. It must have been far from a comfortable journey, and the arrangement looked to us as it passed away down the road to the seashore in constant imminent danger of an unpleasant spill. By some means they got to the water-side, where afterwards we found Lieutenant Sugden still sitting in the chair, now planted firmly in the ground. He had not yet done laughing, and appeared highly amused with his novel ride. Next our belongings were brought down, and then we mustered with our crew to embark in a large ship's whale-boat, when, to our surprise and consternation, we discovered that the rudder was missing, and that there were only two short oars in the boat instead of the four long ones with which she should be navigated through such water with anything like expedition and safety. It was useless and vain to try to get into Guttling's store, where our captain had left these things carefully locked up, for the proprietor of that place was at the other end of the island doing his final business before the departure of the steamer, and there was not a soul about his place. There was no time to be lost, or we should most assuredly miss the "Courland," and then our last state would be worse than our first. There was nothing for it but to do our level best with what we had; so, augmenting them with a couple of native paddles to assist in propelling, and to aid the steering, we started on our journey, the crew of natives being stimulated to supreme efforts by all sorts of promises from Heavisides, and a "spot" of "squareface" each to start with. bent their backs to the work in a way that showed they meant business in the matter of getting to their destination, Heavisides working wonders through shoals and currents with his rudely improvised substitute for steering gear. It was a far from pleasant day in the matter of weather, a nasty cross-surface wind making the navigation, with such ill-assorted oars, very tedious and cranky.

Just as we were putting off on our journey, poor little Bob, who had been transferred back to the "relatives" who had sold him to us on such easy terms, watched us from the shore with intense interest. When the boat began to plough

and rake in the deep water of the open, it must have dawned upon him that this was the end of his pleasant servitude, and that he was looking upon us moving away from him into the great world, of which he knew so little. Most likely thoughts rushed upon him of a return to the treatment which had raised those cruel white weals upon his little black back. Giving a piteous cry, he dashed into the water, and when it began to wash about his chest he struck out, swimming madly after us. Heavisides took pity upon him, and, putting back, lifted him into the boat, where he remained until that craft was sent back from the steamer, having been counselled as to the terrors of the outer world that we were going into, and comforted with sugar, fruit, and pastry, procured from the kindly chief steward.

I should have liked to bring Bob home with me, but I think it would have been a cruelty at his age, and I had not, indeed, the wherewithal at the time to fit him out and pay necessary expenses of passports and passage. Since then, I have been rather glad that I was unable, as I have heard rather disastrous accounts of those who have been brought into the vortex of civilization too suddenly in their childhood. All the same, it must have been a cruel wrench for little Bob. We liked him, and he liked us much as a puppy dog likes kind people, and now he was suddenly left by us all, including his friendly countrymen, Office and Charlie, who were coming with us as far as Delagoa Bay.

The voyage in the whale-boat was far from pleasant, and, indeed, would not have been a pleasure trip under more favourable circumstances, cramped as we were for room. But we eventually got to the ship before she steamed away—an achievement, I verily believe, which would not have been accomplished had she not been considerably delayed by the Portuguese authorities in getting off Jokane and giving to the captain his necessary papers.

At last we steamed away, and our sensations of relief were very considerable. It was pleasant to meet officers on board whom you had known on the previous journeying, and the officers of the "Courland" were good fellows every one. It perhaps made us feel a little awkward at first travelling back second-class, having come out first, with much éclat; but that soon wore off, and we were very happy and comfortable. Captain Limejuce had decreed that we were to return under these altered circumstances, as he considered it and the living in that part of the ship, quite good enough for us. "Give me a 'onest bit of blank pickled pork and some blank blank broad beans, and you can take your coat off 'ere when you want to eat somethin', and then I'm 'appy, instead of wearing out my

blank stomach with a lot of blank kickshaws, and be blanked to them!" We did not mind, however, for Mr. Chalmers, the courteous, cheery purser, did everything to make us comfortable, and we had the infinite joy of knowing that Limejuice and his new friend were to leave us at Delagoa Bay; and the company he represented made monetary reparation and offered apology to us for his conduct. As soon as I had got well on board and the anchor was up and the propeller beginning to churn the water, I sat with my chin upon my arms, leaning on the bulwarks gazing wistfully at my island of exile with strange indescribable thoughts that perhaps would have been blunted or deadened by a continuance of my weary hardships there, but which were now most keenly alive. As Chiloane faded on the horizon, I went down the companion ladder, and, half undressing, I threw myself upon my soft bunk. Oh, luxury of luxuries! a bed, a real, pliable, palpable bed.

"Oh bed! oh, bed! delicious bed!

That heaven upon earth to the weary head!"

So, indeed, I found it after my experiences of an ant-infested concrete floor. It was only now, as I lay here, that I realized how broken and ill I must have been. The strain was over, and reaction was setting in with a return of comfort, mental quiet and pleasant prospects, with the result that I was forced to keep my recumbent position for two days, being in a state of general collapse, which it was impossible to remove. I soon pulled together, however, and, though weak, found myself in high spirits.

The fresh-blowing sea breeze seemed like a revelation, and we sat upon the deck drinking it in. On the evening of the third day we again sighted the mainland; the wind had come up pretty fresh, and, though constantly watching out for it, neither Captain Le Seure nor his black pilot, "Philip," could discover the initial buoy which should guide the steering of a vessel over the dangerous and treacherous bar at Inhambane. So we had to put out to sea and tack about all night hoping for better fortune in the morning.

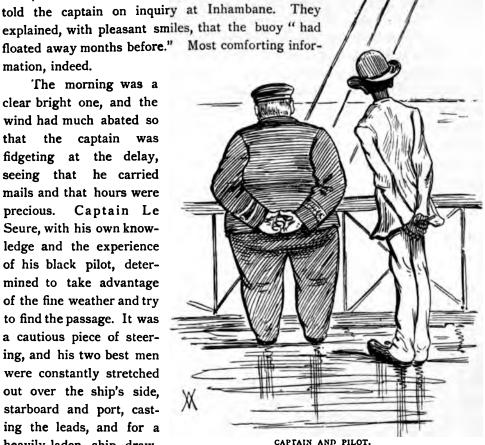
In the morning the same anxious scrutiny took place, but all to no purpose, as we afterwards found the buoy had been cut adrift by the Portuguese—a nice state of affairs, on a coast dangerous to even the most cautious navigation, with every assistance. On my return to England, I read in the Standard of January 13th of this year a telegram from Zanzibar to this effect: "It is reported by cable that

the Portuguese have removed all the buoys from the Mozambique Channel." Here, then, was an elucidation of what the authorities

explained, with pleasant smiles, that the buoy " had floated away months before." Most comforting infor-

mation, indeed.

The morning was a clear bright one, and the wind had much abated so that the captain was fidgeting at the delay, seeing that he carried mails and that hours were precious. Captain Le Seure, with his own knowledge and the experience of his black pilot, determined to take advantage of the fine weather and try to find the passage. It was a cautious piece of steering, and his two best men were constantly stretched out over the ship's side, starboard and port, casting the leads, and for a heavily-laden ship draw-



ing pretty deep water the marking was occasionally very shallow indeed. After some hours of thus cautiously feeling his way, the skilful skipper was rewarded by sighting a more inland buoy, in such a position as to show that he had not at any time missed the proper course by many yards—a rare piece of seamanship, and not accomplished one hour too soon, for, as we ploughed past the now indicated course, the wind freshened, and it began to blow pretty stiffly, the strange colours under the waves showing how perilously near to disastrous sand-bars we were even in this chartered course. Stumps of wreckage here and there sticking up above the water from these shoals showed too plainly the fate of some poor voyagers who had deviated even to such a slight extent—not a quarter of a mile—from the only safe channel way. This is but



one of the places supposed to be open to the commerce of the world, where the Portuguese paralyze enterprise and imperil life by removing the buoys. Away on the port side one of these sand-banks stood right out of the water for about a quarter of a mile in length. At the distance it looked a bright, beautiful, deep salmon pink, and was voted by all a splendid red coral reef. With the aid of a glass, however, this impression was dispelled, for the whole island was discovered

by this means to be one mass of moving life. The entire surface was covered thickly with thousands of flamingoes, roosting there as best they could in their crowded condition. Now and then you could espy half-a-dozen or more of these brilliant birds rise, and, hovering, seek a more comfortable perch, and in settling down a general commotion all round was observable. The row on that densely populated piece of sand must have been tremendous, could one have got near enough to hear it. It was a rare sight to see these beautiful birds in flight, as I did next morning as we lay off Inhambane. They travel in single file, flying very closely to one another, and this feathered line will move along the sky a mile or more in length like a gorgeous crimson ribbon. Every movement of the leader, whether caused by a current of wind or some other reason, the curve taken by him was closely followed by all the rest, giving a beautiful wavy appearance to the moving line, now to the right, now to the left; again rising, and then sinking nearly to the crests of the sea, but never once breaking the symmetry of the long animated stream of plumage. The evening settled in with chilly squalls and rain—the first rain I had experienced for more than half a year, and it was pleasant to stand on deck and let it beat upon my face. When we got into the shelter of the harbour and anchored opposite the pretty town of Inhambane, it was calm and sheltered. During this short voyage we saw nothing of Jokane, for the mighty warrior was very sick, and persistently stuck to his cabin, sending constantly for his friend Heavisides for comfort and consolation. Indeed, on one occasion he begged that obliging individual to see the captain and order him to stop the ship, or, as he put it, "to pull up his horses." When we anchored in the calm at Inhambane he recovered in a very few minutes, and even left his cabin, coming to visit Heavisides in another on the opposite side of the ship, the port-hole of which looked towards the shore. The setting sun was gilding the palm trees and houses of the sea front, and Heavisides explained to the old chief that what he looked out upon was Inhambane. On which information he thrust his woolly head and long sinewy neck out of the port-hole—ejaculating volubly the while, then, drawing his head in again, commenced in an excited manner, and with much dramatic action, to explain something which Heavisides afterwards interpreted for me, and which struck me as very ominous and remarkable at the time and place I heard it, and from the lips of a black king's fighting man in command of a hundred thousand warriors. I give it:—

"Yes, that is the Inhambane of the Portuguese, who built it there, but it is

my brothers' land, and my brothers' trees that grow upon it, before they came without being invited. They make us angry. So angry did they once make us that we drove them into the sea, and made it red with their blood. They will make us angry again, and if you will come to me, you that we love, when they make us very angry, I will lend you a hundred thousand fighting men, and help you to make the sea red with their blood again, and you can take their houses, and wives, and cattle, for my brother will be glad when you come."

Presently, when he had returned to his own cabin, he sent an invitation to us to come and see him. We accepted his invitation, and found him lying in state on his bunk. He pulled himself up to welcome us, and, with me, went through the pantomime of pulling me out of the chair, with much chuckling and laughing at ' the memory of my unintentional humour in the hut at Chiloane, of which he never seemed to tire. He offered us gin and snuff, and talked pleasantly with Heavisides, his little wife being curled up the while like a kitten on the floor of the cabin. She was given some trifling presents, such as a silk scarf and a brightcoloured pocket-handkerchief. It was most amusing to see with what grasping ingenuity the old man would annex these articles and explain why they were not good for the child and most indispensable for him. I bethought me of a little square of looking-glass in a tinsel frame, which I had received in part payment for one of my highly-coloured works of art from a Banyan at Chiloane, and went to my cabin to fetch it. This I presented to the little matron, and great was her delight as she twisted and turned it about looking at herself reflected in it. clicks and chuckles of pleasure soon drew the attention of her lord and master to this new toy, and he stretched forward and snatched it from her, and, gazing at himself for a few moments in silence, he turned to Heavisides, and in a grave and sanctimonious manner explained that it must be for him; in fact, he could not do without it, for he was growing a beard -here he pulled the few woolly hairs that decked the tip of his chin-and he could not do without this mirror but must have it to watch the growth of his beard. Wives did not grow beards and therefore did not require looking-glasses to watch them; so it was no use to her, and as for him, he could not grow his beard properly if he had not got it to watch with. While we were thus pleasantly occupied, a black Portuguese, under the influence of liquor, lurched into the cabin in a somewhat unceremonious However, as Jokane was the guest of the Portuguese authorities, we came to the conclusion that this bright specimen was an envoy from them who

wished to confer with him, so we withdrew, and while Heavisides and I were talking together in my cabin at the opposite side of the saloon, his quick, trained ear caught sounds that arrested his attention. "Great Scott, Mac! that fellow has called the old man a dog, and he has told the girl to get his fighting-sticks! There will be the mischief to pay!" and he hurried across. Out came the lurching Portuguese cad, with his pot-hat on the back of his head, and after him came the king's fighting man wheedling him with a sardonic smile, and then across his shoulder calling softly to his infantine spouse. " Quick, bring me my fighting-sticks, I must make blood! We will then see who is the dog!" The poor child came out dancing with glee and delight, untying the covering of the blade of one of the assegais and reiterating, "Blood! blood, he is going to make blood!" Heavisides grasped the situation, and told me hurriedly to go and fetch Mr. Chalmers, the purser, and have the Portuguese brute removed, meantime occupying the attention of Jokane. The purser came and had the drunken intruder removed to the smoking-room, where he locked him in for the night. He was a Custom-house official who had to sleep on board while we were in the harbour. Jokane was very wroth at not having got satisfaction, but Heavisides had rare influence with him, and soothed him over by explaining that his insulter was not even a dog, that he was only a pig and unworthy of his anger, and that he could not dirty his faithful fighting-stick with his blood; that they were going to throw him into the sea for the sharks, who like bad meat, and ever so many other forms of annihilation which seemed to soothe, but not quite satisfy, the warrior. He allowed his keen-bladed assegai to be wrapped up again, and reluctantly put away by his disappointed companion. We talked with him pleasantly, through the medium of Heavisides, of course; and Dr. Roberts having given him a white shirt, which he very much coveted, and immediately put on, he seemed to have pretty well forgotten the insult, and shortly was induced to return to his cabin and go to bed. We also retired, but I had not begun to undress when Heavisides came into my cabin, and said, "Mac, I don't feel comfortable about the old man [meaning Jokane]. I have overheard him talking to the little girl, and he says he must make blood to-night, and, take my word, he will prowl about when the ship is all asleep until he does make it. I mean to sit up and prevent it, for there might be no end of a mess before he could be stopped, and it would all be reported that we English had incited him against that Portogoose. Will you join me?" I did, and Dr. Roberts and Lieutenant Sugden did the same. We told the purser of our intention, and he gladly let us have a lamp in the saloon, where we sat reading or chatting softly.

Heavisides was not far wrong in his estimate, for we had not sat long before the old chief emerged in a stealthy manner with his naked weapon in his hand, his loins girt up for action with a swathing of green cloth, the rest of his body naked. I shall never forget the expression of his eyes. There was no speculation in them, but a terrible dull glare that was hideous and forbidding. I afterwards learnt that he was "seeing blood."

We kept perfectly quiet, leaving him to Heavisides, who knew how to manage him to a nicety, and did so to the extent of getting his horrible weapon from him, and talking to him until he laughed and admitted that the pig-man was really not worthy of his steel, and, in fact, he would not use it on him, but would only treat him as a pig, and "cut his throat with my knife." This he said, displaying an elaborate hunting-knife. His friend and counsellor again soothed him over, and he retired. The wary Heavisides was not to be caught napping, however, and he was right, for three times during the night did that bloodthirsty old savage come out seeking whom he might devour. We were glad when morning came and the half-caste Portuguese was put ashore with a complaint to his superiors.

He had given us a far from pleasant night of it, and most assuredly it was not to save his miserable carcass that we kept vigil, but to protect from trouble one vastly superior to him, a courteous, amiable savage whom, with one word of brutal insult he had changed into a wild beast thirsting for blood.

In the course of the morning Jokane emerged radiant and dressed in the white shirt of the doctor put on over everything else. He wanted studs for it, but like "broken sports," we were studless. The chief steward, however, came to the rescue, and Jokane was supremely happy, but he had not forgotten his intruder of last night, and prowled about the deck smiling and humming, but all the time with a weapon concealed in his tunic, keeping a keen eye on the watch for hls tormentor. Cargo had to be discharged and taken in at Inhambane, so that it was late in the day before we were ready to continue our journey. We got word that, for some reason or other, the Portuguese were throwing all the English they could find at this place into tronk on the slightest pretext, or "on suspicion," so we did not go ashore. The niggers, Office, Charlie, and Matches, begged to be allowed to put off in a boat "to visit" for a few hours; indeed, Charlie made such a heart-touching appeal that he had a wife there, and he

wanted to see whether he would stay with her or go on to his other one near Delagoa Bay, that, with many warnings and admonitions as to returning in time, they got permission, under the supervision of Office. Charlie was, indeed, a vision to make glad the heart of any expectant bride. I had seen him dressed in an original imitation of his white compeers, but on this occasion he was

" Apparelled beyond parallel,"

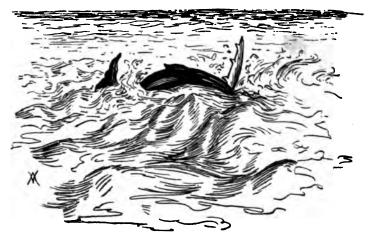
and was smoking a cigar, with the lighted end stuck in his vast mouth. A sight for the gods!

Jokane, his baggage, and little wife later on were taken off in a boat of the Portuguese Customs, and notwithstanding this and other unflagging attentions on the part of that paternal Government—which he seemed to take as acts of vassalage—he did not fail to remind Heavisides of his offer should he like to come and make the sea red with their blood. He then bade us a hearty farewell, giving another imitation of dragging from the chair, with much laughter, when dealing with me, and then, shaking me cordially by both hands, pressed me to come to the kraal with Heavisides. This was the last I saw of this strange barbarian, with his curious mixed soul ever swinging between a happy harmless childishness and a ravenous wild beast's temper.

The "boys" came back in creditably good time, a little "off colour" from the friendly libations of the visits they had paid, especially Charlie, whose indiarubber face was drawn into the most extraordinary contortion, which might denote that he was either under the influence of intense mental anguish or irrepressible fun. He protested that he was not quite satisfied with the wife he had thus casually called on, and would proceed to Delagoa Bay, hoping to find the other one there more to his liking.

At last, we started on our journey again, and had very pleasant times, the sunsets and sunrises once again presenting vistas of delight quite worth the journey to experience, and my habit of wandering off to a quiet part of the ship to study and enjoy them to their full extent, or rather to the full extent of my poor capacity—for their glories were unbounded—won for me the sobriquet of "the scene-shifter," and if inquired for at the evening meal, which was seldom worth a sunset, the usual answer was, I understand, "he is up in the bows joining his flats." One magical evening I was gazing into the glorious billows of a most resplendent sunset, and was lost in its grandeur, when a voice in my ear soon brought me back to a mundane condition.

"Blank fine, isn't it? Like an old woman's Sunday shawl, eh? You'll find a blank sunset won't buy you a blank supper, and, after all, its only a blank action of the atmosphere, a blank chemical process at the best, and be blanked, to it!" and, with a hoarse laugh, the figure of Captain Limejuice waddled with a "leery" slouch along the deck. As I looked after him everything altered, the spars and ropes melted themselves into lamp posts, telegraph wires, and the like, and the tongues of celestial fire in the sun's resting-place were flames of naphtha lamps on costers' barrows and blurred gas-jets flaming in dirty windows. As I stared at the receding figure lurching along, the deck was altered into dirty asphalt, and the thousand glories of the Indian Ocean were merged into the



thousand horrors of the Whitechapel Road. In my agony I cried after him, "Keep your accursed dissertations for a penny lecture at some workman's club, and leave me to my harmless enjoyment."

At Delagoa Bay he left us; oh, precious hour, what a relief!

We had some fine and some foul weather before we reached that place, but so like a yacht is the good ship "Courland" that, with her canvas set and under excellent management, the passage was never irksome.

Amongst the sights of the ocean we witnessed a terrible battle between a thresher and a whale, and a most exciting scene it was. The sea was lashed into a lather, tinged with blood, every now and then, when the whale was forced to come up and blow. Then would the barbed flails of the thresher strike down upon leviathan, who would dash about in wild fury. When the desperate ex-



A TRANSFORMATION SCENE.

counter was drawing to an end, it was appalling to see the huge whale spring high into the air and then plunge into the boiling billows again, the unerring arm of his opponent striking with deadly force before he dived again. They were running with us, and the terrible conflict lasted for about half-an-hour, when the whale, which we could see was far spent, disappeared for the last time, followed by the triumphant thresher, and we saw them no more.

We entered Delagoa Bay after sundown, and next morning were aroused by the booming of cannons. On going on deck, I descried a number of men-of-war and other Portuguese ships with their yard-arms "cock-billed," in mourning for the Duc da Braganza, brother of the king; this was on September 28th, 1889. Strange to say, as we steamed up the Tagus, in the Hawarden Castle, to Lisbon, on the following 26th of October, the same state of affairs was in operation on a more imposing scale—the King himself lay dead.

Limejuice beneficently supplied us with ten shillings each to serve us for the rest of the voyage, and went ashore, holding in his possession a credit note for £1,000, received from his directors on our arrival here, and which he inadvertently let me see. I trust he has rendered good account of his stewardship, for this was "public money." He doubtless thought that the ten shillings per head would be a last withering blow to us, many of them being perforated with holes and useless, but he did not count upon the fact that by good fortune my friend Bill Giles was travelling from Delagoa Bay to Durban in this steamer with us, and who very soon volunteered to make me comfortable upon the monetary score, bless him! Also came on board to proceed to Durban, Maas, an experienced traveller whom I had met on my up journey. He had been cast into tronk on some pretext by the Portuguese, who, he averred, had tried to poison I certainly did not know him, so altered was he; and Dr. Roberts, him. who attended him, said he most certainly was suffering from latent poisoning, and treated him accordingly, so that when we arrived at Durban he was wonderfully changed for the better.

At Durban we spent two very pleasant days. The change into an English settlement, with clean, wide roads and well-built houses was a delightful experience, and it was a rare treat to once more walk through a prosperous town, occupied by the offspring of wholesome British civilization. It was a bank holiday, the day we arrived, and I was now in rare health and spirits to enjoy anything and everything. Horse-racing was the all-absorbing order of the day,

so, of course, horse-racing we went, and very amusing it was. Just like a chapter of English sporting life of a quarter of a century ago.

At the Belgravia Hotel we fared sumptuously, and slept well, being relegated to a small cottage in the garden of the hotel proper. Should I ever sojourn at Durban again, I will endeavour to secure that cottage, for, at that time at least, it struck me as an ideal retreat. Next morning we explored the town, and indulged in what tonsorial luxuries a barber could offer us. Snooks (or whatever his name was) "from Truefitts," did his utmost to make us look more presentable than we had been for many a day.

Towards evening we made for the "Courland" again, over that dreadful bar at Natal. It seems rather extraordinary that, in these days of dynamite and dredging this execrable port could not be raked and blasted into something more navigable.

I remember in our voyage up there was a terrible sea on, and we had to put out and keep about for the night. In the morning, when all was calm, sad havoc presented itself, and now, as we thumped along through the shoals of dolphins, we could see the masts of the "Mary Emily," which, on the night the "Courland" last passed here, I was told, had foundered with all hands lost, only a rope's throw from the shore.

Cape Town was our next destination after the tedium of an open sea voyage with little sight of land. Here we also arrived on the eve of a bank holiday, and on the morning of that day landed and found the town in gala trim. Writers with more experience of this place, and ability to describe it, have told and will tell of Cape Town, its famous mountain, and the beauties of the surrounding country and suburban beauties of Wineburg, Kalk Bay, and the rest.

After a sojourn of three days, and a hearty farewell to Captain Le Seure and his genial officers, who had vouchsafed for us such a good voyage thus far, we were transferred to Messrs. Donald Currie and Co.'s s.s. Hawarden Castle, on board which splendid vessel, under the command of Captain Hamilton, we were made thoroughly at home and comfortable by Mr. Rennie, the courteous chief steward, and Mr. Baker, his able lieutenant.

In a few weeks, as we steamed into Plymouth Sound, my strange experiences amongst the Portuguese in South-East Africa were as a dream that was dreamt, a tale that was told. Nor was it until after weeks of rest and home quiet that I could sufficiently realize the fact that what I had gone through had occurred in a good deal less than the little round of a single year.

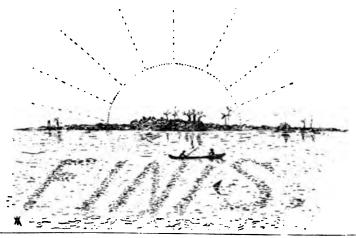
HOME AGAIN.

ARRIVED at home, Portuguese lethargy and delay still influenced my destiny, for I had got ahead of my own despatches, and was the announcer of my own arrival. There was a momentary shock about having to explain to the wife of one's bosom and the children of one's heart that I was not "the man come about the carpets," but the pillar and stay of their existence. For they knew me not. Strawberry marks and other melodramatic subterfuges were, however, not necessary to proclaim my identity. Though "bearded like the pard," and rigged out in the latest ready-made fashions of the Cape Town "Johnnies"—a good two years behind London cut, especially about the hat—I am not surprised that this should have been so. And I soon forgot it in the luxurious realization of what I had never thoroughly appreciated the full value of before.

L'ENVOI.

DISTANT by some months are the events—if they can be designated by such an imposing title—recorded in this book, seeming to me a reiteration of the personal pronoun, quite unavoidable. My impressions of the precarious time I had gone through are deeply marked upon the tablets of my memory, and not all the distractions of London life, and the busy passing things and circumstances in this great hub of humanity, can obliterate the memory of the time of which this is a truthful, if lame record. And, even now, when bound in sleep, I often with cruel realism, dream of some of the most trying periods of this little past, and, starting into scared wakefulness, breath a silent thanksgiving that I am no longer

THE PRISONER OF CHILOANE.



Allen, Scott, and Co., 30. Bouveric Street, London, E.C.

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